

## TRAINING AND USE OF CANINE ENFORCEMENT TEAMS FOR ANTI-SMUGGLING PURPOSES

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**Abstract.** *The article focuses on the training and use of canine enforcement teams for anti-smuggling purposes in different countries (Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand). Several aspects are described history, breeds, training methods, skills to train, daily routine of canine units as well as the job of handlers. It also describes unique Russian experience in this sphere. Detector dogs play a vital role in customs work. Canine teams help protect country's safety and public health by detecting illegal narcotics, firearms and currency.*

**Keywords:** *dog handling, anti-smuggling purposes, breeds of dogs, training methods, Clim Sulimov.*

One of the main aims of the Customs is to prevent the traffic of smuggling. To fulfill this task successfully Customs Services around the world use different methods. I would like to focus on the use of Canine enforcement teams.

I have studied the experience of different countries in this sphere. They are Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Dogs are amazing creatures, capable of so much more than many of us realize – they help ordinary people in extraordinary ways. Dogs can sniff out certain substances which ordinary machines can't trace. And they are much cheaper! According to the recent survey made in the USA, Customs & Border Protection Dogs are ranked the fourth after Police dogs, Fire Dogs, Search & Rescue Dogs.

**History.** Detector dogs have been used for customs purposes since the 1960s. The Mexican government was the first to use dogs to detect agricultural quarantine items. In the late 1970s, the United States developed a similar programme to search international mail and incoming passengers' baggage at international airports. In 1984, US started a pilot programme. Later, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia joined the programme.

**Passive vs Active.** When the programme initially started, all drug dogs were trained to indicate actively by scratching, digging, biting and barking at the source of the contraband odour. This was an effective way to de-

ter drug and firearm smuggling. Primarily, only passive dog training is now conducted.

In 1993, the Passive Detector Dog Service was introduced. Passive dogs are trained for all aspects of the customs working environment, but are especially effective in inspecting travellers for body packs and hand-carried items that are used to smuggle contraband.

Passive dogs will sit beside the source of the trained odour. The docile and friendly nature of the dogs allows officers to peacefully circulate with them among arriving travellers.

**Breeds.** Nowadays Canine enforcement teams use a wide variety of dogs. But as drug detector dogs are often on show in public areas (such as airport terminals) Customs Services prefer to choose the breeds of which people are not frightened. That is why in the Great Britain, for example, they don't use Alsations or Rottweilers as these dogs are considered aggressive and threatening. Countries prefer mainly Labrador retrievers, Beagles, Collies, German Shepherds, Spaniels, Pointers and mixed breeds are used for drug detection work. They display natural ability and desire to retrieve, good physical condition and sociability. Dogs are bold but not aggressive.

**Training.** Detector dog and handler training is conducted at the National Detector Dog Training Facility.

Training is done in three stages:

- basic detector dog training;
- regional transition training;
- people search training.

They are usually 12 to 20-months old when their training begins. After only a few exercises, it can be determined if the dog has the potential to meet the requirements: attitude, temperament and strong retrieval instincts. Only 1 of 10 dogs is accepted for training. Dogs are matched with officers to form detector dog teams. It takes about 8-10 weeks to train a dog and a handler.

To the dog, finding drugs is fun. This is reflected in the dog's behavior: it is highly active at work, and enjoys the reward or praise by its handler when it makes a find, but the dog is not allowed to feel that it is playing. To make a clear distinction between work and play, the working dog wears a special harness. When the handler puts the harness on the dog, the animal knows it is on duty.

Are detector dogs addicted to drugs and how are they trained? The dogs never come into contact with the drugs and never become addicted to them. The dogs are trained to play and search for a tennis ball, which gradually has a scent like tobacco or drugs introduced. They respond silently or sit when indicating smuggling and are rewarded with food for correct responses. This allows the dog to focus for that particular type of scent. After the school exam, the team then have further on the job training at the work place. The dog handler must maintain an intensive training schedule to give every opportunity to reach its genetic potential.

**Skills to train.** Detector dogs work at sea ports, airports, international rail stations and search people, baggage, cargo as well as vehicles, ships, aircraft and so on. Sometimes they are used to search private homes and vehicles on Customs and Police search warrants. Dogs are multi-skilled and are trained to detect a variety of items. Each dog has a very different speciality: drug-detector dogs and explosive-detector dogs. [Drug-detector dogs](#) are trained to find a wide variety of illegal drugs: cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, amphetamine and others. [Explosive-detector dogs](#) are skilled at detecting the presence of explosives and firearms when they screen goods and cargo coming in or going out.

They also help prevent harmful pests and diseases by detecting illegal plants, fruits,

meat and products of animal origin. Detector dogs sometimes identify other things which are of interest in certain situation: tobacco, currency, caviar, medicines and people.

**Down to business.** You know that customs officers have to work in shifts so do the dogs. They get plenty of exercise every day. Customs officers have to cope with the increasing number of passengers and dogs have to keep pace with the rhythm. That is why detector dogs start their day with a run and socialising with other dogs. Then they travel with their dog handler to their worksite. The dogs are transported in air-conditioned vehicles that act as a mobile kennel when the dog is at work. When a flight lands, the dogs work among the passengers and their luggage. But every 30 minutes when a dog gets tired they rest and play while other dogs take over. At the end of the 8-hour shift, dogs go back to their kennel, have dinner and a big long sleep. Actually the dogs have 3 working days a week. On the other days they go for walks, swim, and play with other dogs.

After long and loyal service when they are about eight years old dogs retire. Normally, the handler takes the dog home or they find suitable owners and a good home for their ex-partners.

**Dog handlers.** Handlers are normally recruited from within the Customs. They undergo mandatory officer training before they undertake basic dog handler training. All dog handlers are experienced Customs officers and have a minimum of two years service before joining the detector dog unit. The dog handlers must be dedicated to their job. They may be required to be on call 24 hours a day and must be willing to travel to other locations on short notice. During the basic training, the dog handlers learn how to care for, maintain and train their dogs. They must also be faithful to their dogs, while both on- and off- duty. Handlers and dogs are assessed on an ongoing basis, ensuring that detector dog teams operate to an acceptable standard in order to achieve operational effectiveness. Special dog units from other law enforcement (Police, Aviation Security Service, Ministry of Justice) work alongside each other and share training resources.

As to Russia, we are not falling behind developed countries. Moreover, Aeroflot's chief dog breeder Clim Sulimov has managed to cross dogs and golden jackals. The jackal-dog half-breeds turned out to have an extraordinarily sensitive sense of smell and good learning capabilities. They are perfect for our country because they can work efficiently no matter whether the temperature is  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$  or  $+40^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Besides, they are smaller than German shepherds, and therefore less intimidating to travelers, and can creep into narrow spots during aircraft inspections. These dogs can detect trace amounts of explosive smaller than a grain of sand. They track down thieves

who break baggage and wipe off their fingerprints. The dogs have an unusual feature: their tails, which normally curl up like a huskie's, sag down when the animals are tired, a convenient signal that indicates their handlers should give them a rest.

To sum up, detector dogs play a vital role in Customs work. These teams help protect country's safety and public health by detecting illegal narcotics, firearms and currency. Their acute sense of smell and hunting instincts makes them an essential tool in efforts to combat and deter smugglers and those seeking to avoid border controls.

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## ОБУЧЕНИЕ И ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ СОБАК ДЛЯ БОРЬБЫ С КОНТРАБАНДОЙ

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***Аннотация.** В данной статье рассматриваются обучение и использование кинологических собак в различных странах (Великобритании, Канаде, Австралии и Новой Зеландии) для предотвращения провоза контрабанды. Раскрываются несколько аспектов: история, породы, обучение, овладение навыками, распорядок дня собак, а также деятельность их хозяев – кинологов. Также отражается уникальный российский опыт в данной сфере.*

*Специально обученные собаки играют важную роль в работе таможенных органов. Кинологические подразделения помогают обеспечивать безопасность и здоровье населения путем выявления незаконного оборота наркотических средств, огнестрельного оружия и валюты.*

***Ключевые слова:** кинология, борьба с контрабандой, породы собак, обучение собак, Клим Сулимов.*