

Trained Dogs, an Effective Resource to Execute Control and Maintenance Police Operations

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Abstract:

Dogs have accompanied humans for more than 27.000 years. The first descendants of wolves associated with humans, in a symbiotic relation that last to these days. One of the reasons that started and established a good relationship between humans and dogs have been the protection, security, company, loyalty and mutual support that haven't changed a lot since. So, dog qualities and defense skills have been exploited to strengthen and reach the objectives of public security and order in Ecuador. In this article, the importance and influence of trained dogs from National Police as a complementary resource in the area of citizen security and public order, optimizing and strengthen a more than necessary service to reach a pacific coexistence in Ecuadorian society.

Key Word: Training, Trained dogs, Public order, Security, Dog guide, National Police.

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I. Introduction

Since beginning of humanity, the dog has always been next to man, this is evidenced with findings of dog remains next to humans at the end of neolithic era. In great ancient civilizations: Chaldean, Assyrian and Egyptian, the dog, with his loyalty, accompanied the man during hunting, being the dog, motif for ancient writers, being found references in decoded writings and in bricks belonging to these civilizations¹. formerly in Greece and Rome, trained dogs fulfilled of guardians, shepherding and even in supporting in wars. Regarding this remote past, it has been possible to date trained dog fossils in the year 8400 b.C., what has led to calculate that dog training in hunting or harvest functions was produced between ten and fourteen thousand years ago^{2,3}.

Transit from Asian wolves (*Canis lupus*) and African jackals (*Canis aureus*) to company dogs (*Canis familiaris*) occurs in the course of thousands of years, in which the man and wolf started to experience a closest coexistence, this relation surged because natural selection and mostly with mutual survival purposes, meanwhile the human provides food through waste from hunting made by the first settlements of nomad tribes, this in turn took advantage of the close presence of the primitive dog (wolf), with purposes of company and for their own protection, taking benefits from natural skills and characteristics of wolves such as nose, hearing, speed and strength, what permitted to warn danger to tribes, being really useful for surviving and protection¹.

Historical background on the use of dogs for defense and attack purposes

The training and use of dogs with specific security purposes, according to history, takes place to the era of Alejandro Magno who used the "Tibet Dogos" to transport his soldiers' guns, taking advantage from their size and strength. Similarly, the Roman legion used the dogs covered with leather blankets, transporting vessels with burning oil to provoke fires in enemy settlements. In the context of conquest of America, the dog distinguishes with the horse, of which is the ideal complement, as one of the most firm and constant military allies of Spanish conquerors⁴. The dogs were used constantly in combat throughout the conquest, forming part of the shock troop, attacking the natives, to take advantage of the fear and initial bewilderment or in rearguard in defensive labors of the conquest group, in charge of cattle keeper or the sick that always hindered and delayed the general advance of the group. Christopher Columbus himself was the first to use bulldogs in the first repressive campaigns in Jamaica y Spain in 1494 y 1495 respectively: "A dog makes a great war here, so much so that its company is appreciated as ten men, and we have great need of them", and since all every conquest group that appreciate themselves brought an undetermined number of dogs to be used as a warlike resource of singular importance⁵.

On the other hand, in the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP26) developed in Scotland in 2021 around 200 police dogs were deployed to support the event to maintain the public order, if necessary,

three types of police dogs were used, these were: crowd control dogs, search for missing people, and criminal suspects detection. On this country is common that dogs support police deploy unlike other countries that no consent the use for these events⁶.

Operational benefits observed in the use of trained dogs for control, maintenance and restoration of public order in Ecuador.

The K-9 unit of the National Police of Ecuador, actually leads the dog training in five specialties: Public order control, dog-assisted therapy, search of human remains, drug detector dogs and public relations, and show. Every dog is selected carefully for every specialty such as the case of the training for the Guard and Defense Squad, in charge of provide public order control and security in places with greater concurrence, the dogs need to pass rigorous physical tests, they receive training in basic obedience, attack, agility and resilience^{7, 8}. They need to be secure animals when surrounded by strangers, strident sounds from city or gunshots. They are willing to put lots of physical effort and discipline in their basic tasks⁷.

Currently, “police dogs” are a medium and adequate resource to complement public security functions. Correctly trained dogs in “guard and defense”, obey fast received orders, they Will be aggressive when ordered, but they will stop aggression the moment the suspect is disarmed immobile or simply desist violent actions, in this case the dog will only proceed in vigilance and custody.

Various options rotate around the breed of police dogs, its classification has been done by expert veterinaries, trainers considering the character, animal behavior and the job the dog will perform. For example, the dog breeds for public order control are: Doberman Pinscher, Rottweiler, Boxer, German shepherd and Schnauzer⁹. These breeds are selected for their capacity of being alert, loyalty, nose, and others¹⁰.

The use of dogs is a priceless resource against public disorder, crowd presence, etc., in view of the fact that it provides a positive response against these situations. Nevertheless, it is essential to comprehend that the deployment of dogs is delicate, it gives a balance point between police and crowd, providing protection to police against direct attack. To increase effectivity of crowd containment, dispersion and arrests; the formation of shields eases the work. However, is important to not maintain a static position and both needs to be supported by officers. In this stage the dog positions are important to disperse the crowd¹¹.

In Ecuador, as stated in the article 158 of the Republic of Ecuador, the internal protection and maintenance of public order are privative functions of the State and responsibility of National Police, under this constitutional principle the police institution execute operatives with the support of trained dog for control, maintenance and restoration of public order in situations such as: preventive anti-criminal patrol, public manifestations, mass gathering events of people (sports, artistic, religious, cultural, political, etc.) even, its needed the intervention with operatives of control, maintenance and reestablishment during and after emergency situations and natural disasters, from this types of interventions surge abundant experiences that have permitted the operative effectiveness that provides a trained dog to intervene in police operations related to control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order¹², which are detailed below.

Optimize the human resource in police intervention

The use of trained dogs in autonomous or coordinated interventions of control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order allows to optimize significant the human resource, thanks to the wide range of dissuasive reach through the use of short and large leashes that can vary between 1.50 y 3 meters, that are used in a tactical way by the guide or handler during the intervention with the dog, which leads to a coverage of range of space and distance much wider, the same, that, in other cases could have been covered by a human contingent equivalent to 5 police officers for each canine pairing (handler-dog).

Increases the range to react to attacks at close range

During the police operations of control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order, has been beneficial and very effective to have support from trained dogs, as given that the distance obtained between suspect and the police officer through the use of large leashes, is obtained a major space of reaction, according to Dennis Tueller in his article named «How Close is Too Close?»¹³, that manifest the importance of maintaining a space of reaction called «Area of danger» in the case there exists an attack of an adversary provided of a white or a blunt weapon, from there a question arises: In which distance the adversary becomes a threat?, about the cited article it is established that is needed approximately half and a second to react to an aggression that surge of a typical distance of 6,5 meters. In this sense is favorable the support and presence of dogs in intervention of control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order, with the purpose of distance the possible aggressor out of the “area of danger” off the police officer.

Alternative to the use of less lethal and lethal weapons

The use of trained dogs in interventions of control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order, it becomes an effective alternative that minimize the use of less lethal weaponry or potentially lethal, which has harmony with the international standard that recommends, “among the means to be used, the least harmful will be used”¹⁴; in this sense the use of trained dogs for control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order, depending the circumstances, is an alternative to the necessity of appeal to the use of firearms whether they use controlled impact cartridges or cartridges with chemical agent shoot through these types of guns, the harmful results that may surge from the confrontation would be serious, causing severe damage in the suspect.

Additionally, it has been observed that the use of dogs with an advanced security training and specifically in the sub-specialty of incursions or searching of dangerous fugitives, depending the circumstances, can be an alternative to use of lethal guns given that these could execute high risk interventions directed to disarm law offenders in situations of kidnapping, hostage taking or jailbreaks.

Allows easy access and mobility in close spaces

There are circumstances of disturbance of public order, that arise in spaces such as: stadiums, coliseums, theatres, bullfighting squares or in general close spaces where develop events of massive gathering, whether they are sports, artistic, cultural, political, religious, etc., where outrages can surge or star in a specific part of the attending crowd, being necessary an immediate intervention, discretionary and individualized, considering the diversity of attendants that could occur according to the type of event.

In this cases, versatility of trained dogs to mobilize in close ranged spaces between conglomerates of people, go up or downstairs, evade obstacles, result operatively very useful to intervene these scenarios, whenever , in the majority of cases the use of other media would be limited such as: chemical agent, cattle horse, motorbikes, armored vehicles, less lethal ammo of controlled impact, among others entre that, due to the characteristics of the event could cause injuries, permanent damage and even death to the rest of attendants in which could be children, disabled people, older adults, pregnant women or other people oblivious to the violent situation that is presented in the interior of the close space.

Slows the provocation and physical contact

Considering the orientations of the United Nations in matter of human rights about the employment of less lethal guns in order maintenance, notes that, “law enforcement personnel should delay direct contact or interaction with the public if it makes the need to use force or the potential for violent outcomes less likely” mutually¹⁵. One of the principal operative benefits observed with the use of trained dogs is that, the simple passive presence of canine specimen in foot-patrols or through tactical formation against pacific or violent crowds, persuade the intervened or rioters to have a reflexive distance in relation to the police officers, which reduced the defying acts and physical provocations that in most occasions results in combat between intervened and police. Therefore, the use of trained dogs for operations of control, maintenance and reestablishment of public order, reduce significantly the probability that the personnel forces of order and particulars appeal to aggression, in this way the severity of damage that may be caused is reduced.

Allows individual interventions

Within the development of the operative activities where exist various intervened, is effective the use of trained dogs to neutralize, contain, weaken or to reduce momentarily and individually to the people that are executing violent or dangerous actions, this type of intervention based on the training, are executed through actions directed only to upper or lower limbs through the offender is executing violent actions such as: physical aggression, throwing blunt objects, and others.

Execute these type of neutralizations permits to apply individualized actions inside the range of a crowd or a group of intervened people, i.e., the range of harmful results in none case will be general, in all cases it will be particular and independent. This allows to execute police operations with dogs whenever the inciters or authors of violent actions are identified, which, according as indicated in the paragraph 85 the sentence of case Zambrano Vélez and others Vs. Ecuador from July 4th, 2007 where is indicated that, “In situations of peace, state agents must distinguish between persons who, by their actions, constitute an imminent threat of death or serious injury and those who do not present such a threat, and use force only against the first”¹⁶

II. Conclusion

Because of dogs' natural characteristics of sight, nose, strength and speed more developed than human, have achieved that their support in the security scope, previous to an adequate training to become a strength for National Police of Ecuador during the development of control operations, maintenance y reestablishment of public order, this based on their innate nature of guardian and protector, that has made it the perfect companion of police officers specialized as dog guides in Ecuador.

The operative benefits that has been proposed along the present article, allow to evaluate from a different sight the contribution that trained dogs of National Police give during the control operations, maintenance y reestablishment of public order, where whit their support can execute discretionary actions of defense and attack, for dissuasion and reaction in circumstances where crowds of people exist that, executing physical force in a generalized way or trough violent acts that could provoke death, injuries to police officers, other people or severe damage to public or private goods.

The relationship between dog and his guide, can become so close such as those that humans establish between them, this relationship strengthens and maintain based on the care, training and daily work, converting the canine pairing in a receptive and empathic pair in every moment of their coexistence at the service of society.

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