

Integrating Military Working Dogs into Counter-IED and Counterinsurgency Operations



Quick Reference Card

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MWD Rules for Avoiding Trouble (page 1-10)

There are four basic rules to keep tactical leaders who may be unfamiliar with MWDs from employing them in ways that are prohibited:

1. **Never employ an MWD outside of its trained capabilities.**
2. **Never employ MWDs during interrogation or tactical questioning.**
3. **Never use an MWD to confirm a reported IED.**
4. **Never allow an MWD to become a pet or unit mascot.**

Hasty Attachment Procedures (page F-1)

Often, an MWD team arrives at a unit immediately before mission commencement. Detailed coordination and preparation are not possible in these situations. The following list is the minimum required information exchange for the unit and MWD team and should take no more than 10 minutes to complete:

From MWD Handler to Unit:

- MWD Final or Conditioned Response
- On-Lead and Off-Lead capabilities, to include off-lead ranges
- What the MWD is trained to detect
- MWD temperament
- If MWD is trained for controlled aggression
- Recommended 'Handler Down' actions
- Emergency recall procedures
- Logistics on hand and shortfalls
- Endurance of MWD
- Any issues

From Tactical Commander to MWD Handler:

Enemy:

- Where has the enemy emplaced IEDs in the past? (roads, curbs, doorframes, alleyways, hanging from trees, etc.)
- Has the enemy used markers to enhance their ability to target coalition forces? (stacked rocks, branches, paint, etc.)
- What types of devices has the enemy used? (large buried IED, speed bump IED, daisy-chained IEDs, VBIED, PBIED, hoax IEDs, etc.)
- What types of attacks? (small arms, complex, etc.)

Tactical Leaders' MWD Integration Checklist (page 1-11)

The following checklist contains the critical tasks associated with integrating MWDs into C-IED and counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Most tasks on the checklist have a detailed description and some have a corresponding academic section in the accompanying handbook, designed to provide leaders with a foundation of knowledge of MWDs and their use.

Plan

- Request MWD by type or mission description (see 2.4.1, *Choosing the Right MWD* on page 2-11).
- Establish liaison with the MWD Team(s) when they arrive:
 - Assign unit point of contact/liaison officer (POC/LNO) to handler.
 - Assign MWD team a workspace for planning and preparation.
 - Assign MWD team living areas.
 - Inform MWD handler if any other MWDs are involved in operation.
- Incorporate MWD handler into the planning process.
- Brief MWD handler on enemy situation (see 2.2, *Enemy*, on page 2-4).
- Ensure MWD target odors match threat in area of operation (AO).
- Tell the handler if the unit has used MWDs and if so, provide an assessment.
- Have MWD handler brief unit leadership (see *MWD Team's Brief to Unit Leadership* on page 2-19).
- Talk to the handler about his dog's disposition (see *Talk to the handler about his dog's disposition* line item on page 4-3).



- What types of triggers? (pressure plate, saw blade, command wire, etc.)
- What types of explosives? (TNT, PETN, MIL-Grade, HME, etc.)
- What forms of initiation devices has the enemy used? (MIL or commercial-grade cap, etc.)
- Has the enemy employed masking odors in the past? (garbage, carcasses, food, etc.)
- Has the enemy used secondary/multiple devices?
- Does the enemy observe attacks from covered and concealed positions nearby?
- How does the enemy conceal the devices?
- How does the enemy transport IED materials?
- Where have previous cache sites been found?
- In what specific areas does the enemy hide caches? (barns, irrigation ditches, inside buildings, etc.)
- Assign MWD task and purpose.
- Assign unit to which the MWD team is attached.
- Assign position in formation.
- Assign vehicle (if needed).
- Determine potential areas where involuntary MWD reactions, such as barking, could compromise the mission.
- Designate Security Personnel.
- Designate back-up canine caregiver.
- Clarify MWD actions on contact (e.g., go to ground, attach back to PLTSGT, etc.).
- Clarify emergency medicine, first aid, and evacuation information.

- Incorporate MWD team into tactics factoring in on-lead (6-30 m) or off-lead (minimum 25 m from handler).
- Plan for the duration of searches (with MWD handler) considering:
 - Energy level of dog
 - Terrain type
 - Presence of distracters
 - Weather
 - Level of search detail required
- Coordinate with the higher headquarters for MWD logistical support.
- Task unit and MWD handlers (see 3.1, *MWD Operations Order (OPORD) Input*, starting on page 3-1).

Prepare

- Brief unit members on their responsibilities regarding MWD (see *MWD Handler* list on page 4-5).
- Have handler give MWD team brief to the unit (see *MWD Team Brief* on page 3-2).
- Have handler demonstrate MWD capabilities to the unit.
- Integrate MWD team into PCC/PCI (see *Annex B Inspections*, starting on page B-1).
- Integrate MWD team into rehearsals (see 2.4.2, *Integrating MWDs with Units*, starting on page 2-15):
 - Actions on objective
 - Actions on contact
 - Movement techniques and MWD search types during movement
 - MWD security actions

Execute

- Supervise and refine MWD employment plan.
- Conduct informal MWD assessment, as appropriate (see 4.4, *Informal Assessment TTP*, starting on page 4-8).

Pre-Combat Inspection Checklist (page B-1)

- Handler and MWD equipment packed in accordance with MWD-specific SOP
- Adequate space in transport vehicle allotted for MWD and MWD shipping crate (if required)
- Handler and MWD proficient in mission-critical skills
- MWD imprinted on local explosives that may be encountered on the mission
- Approved dog food and potable water available to sustain MWD for the duration of the mission
- First aid kit and supplies replenished and packed
- MWD MEDEVAC plan established
- Temporary MWD housing plan established for overnight missions
- Unit medic/corpsman aware of pre-existing medical conditions the MWD may have
- Handler included in METT-TC analysis and mission planning
- Handler briefed on current threats and enemy TTP
- Unit briefed by handler on best employment of MWD
- Non-MWD unit personnel briefed on MWD team's integration in current operation and how to best protect and support the MWD team
- Immediate action and reporting procedures established in the event of an IED or explosives find



WIND PENETRATES

Without other factors, the stronger the wind, the longer the scent cone. Length Scents fans out

The stronger the wind, the thinner the cone (less width).

The greatest concentration of scent is often at the base of walls because of swirling. This type of swirl occurs at the end of walls also.

SWIRLING WIND

Wind goes through most things and carries scent from almost everything. MWDs do not have to be inside or next to the source of scent in order to detect odor.

BAD WIND=LESS DETECTION

Good Bad

Wind direction is the most important factor to consider in detecting scent: rarely will there be "perfect wind." MWD handlers will tailor their search patterns in order to approach targets from the downwind side. MWD search patterns are determined as handlers attempt to get the most favorable wind. Tactical constraints often prohibit MWDs from approaching targets from a favorable wind angle.

ORBIT

The search technique that MWDs during movement is called "orbiting." Orbiting is a random back-and-forth pattern that allows the MWD to search on the move. MWDs can orbit constantly during movement. Units following an orbiting MWD should not consider that area cleared. Orbiting is less reliable than a deliberate search because the MWD does not have a specific target on which to focus. *Analogy:* Units in a patrol formation have some degree of security, but the security posture is heightened at danger areas. An MWD orbiting is similar.

SECURITY TEAM

Off-leash MWDs may use a "V" as the optimal MWD handler to focus on the MWD while having security in front and at flanks. The handler can work in any formation.

The MWD team does not include security personnel. Security must be tasked from the receiving unit. Consideration should be given to the rotation of security personnel, as the MWD team may be rotated between units. Once enemy contact occurs, the security team may be required to participate in direct action against the enemy. Handlers should have IA drills for enemy contact as well as for loss of their security teams.

VEHICLE SEARCH

Normal search areas for vehicles

Trunk Door Seams Bumpers Wheel Wells Engine Compartment

Hasty searches can be accomplished without opening doors/windows.

To give the MWD the best chance of detecting odor, always have the cargo doors opened.

MWD should check compartments under trucks (spare tires, tools, etc.).

Vehicles, no matter how well made, have flaws and seams where scent exits the vehicle; scent escapes the vehicle even when there is no wind. The approach to vehicles should be from the downwind side. A deliberate search of the vehicle and cargo is often required. For a deliberate search, the cargo and passengers should be removed from the vehicle and all doors/compartments opened.

CULVERT SEARCH

Culverts create unique wind patterns (tunneling).

If wind is blowing perpendicular to the road and through the culvert, the MWD team should approach from the downwind side after security is established. The wind will carry scent towards the MWD position. Parallel winds do not provide a predictable downwind flank. Most thorough searches involve sending the MWD through the culvert; the handler should be positioned to see the MWD at all times and will have to move forward to adequately clear the culvert.

DANGER AREA

Establish near side security.

The MWD team may move with the far side security team in order to search the route to the far side security position. The team may also search the far side position and subsequent route forward.

Danger Areas normally present unique search requirements for the MWD team. Normal Danger Area procedures should be followed. Prior to any entry into the danger area, an off-leash route search along the route across the danger area is preferred, as handler security is lacking. MWD teams may travel with and support the far side security team once they leave the near side. Once far side security is established, the MWD team may conduct a more thorough search of the danger area if required.

EXTERIOR BUILDING SEARCH

Buildings "bleed" air/scent even with no wind.

Corner positions allow a handler to observe the MWD search along two downwind sides without repositioning.

Approach buildings from downwind side.

Wind passes through buildings and exits in several places. Doors, windows, and structural flaws offer the best opportunities to establish scent. Wind will also pass through building materials. Commence search on the two downwind sides (a two-sided search [only] may be required for larger buildings, warehouses, etc., due to time constraints). Scent also carries beyond the outer walls, dependant on wind conditions. The most detailed search is obtained when the MWD searches all four sides.

POINT SEARCH

Keep civilians and other distractions away from search area.

Unit conducts 5-25 checks. MWD Team participates.

Security teams focus on potential threats, not on the MWD Team.

Off-leash searches allow for greater distance between handler and IEDs, thereby increasing handler safety.

MWDs search from downwind, if possible.

Point searches are often required during movement, so MWDs should be positioned near the unit leader. A point search is focused on a specific target, such as an intersection, suspicious vehicle, bag along the roadside, previous IED location, etc. Commanders and handlers should approach the target with an understanding of enemy TTP for IED initiation and secondary devices (see *Enemy* checklist on page 3-1). Ensure security is in place and that the patrol understands Battle Drills for IED finds and detonations. Security considerations differ based on leash length (short leash, long leash, off-leash). Off-leash searches provide more stand-off for the handler than on-leash searches. Once an IED is discovered, the MWD moves to a secure position and C-IED procedures are initiated.

AREA SWEEP

Unit conducts 5-25 checks. MWD Team participates.

MWDs may sweep around the convoy or vehicles prior to an area sweep.

Unit leader gives clear instruction to MWD team and security team about the area to be swept. Patrol establishes security and reduces distractions before MWD team begins search. MWD team conducts the sweep and reports findings back to unit leader. If other search assets, such as mine-finders, are available, they may be employed after the MWD team completes its search. The search terminates after the area is fully swept or an explosive is discovered.

Keep civilians and other distractions away from search area.

MWDs search from downwind, if possible.

BUILDING SEARCH (Deliberate)

Cultural issues are significant when conducting a building search with MWDs (see section 2.6 *Civil Considerations*). MWDs will perform better, if the building is clear prior to searching. If the building is not cleared, extreme care should be exercised in the contact between the MWD and civilians. Deliberate searches consist of search for personnel followed by an explosive search. A patrol dog is best suited for the search for personnel. The explosive search may be conducted on- or off-leash based on building size, number of civilians, and character of the dog. Use of off-leash dogs or a long leash increases handler safety. Building searches do not usually allow handlers a great deal of stand-off.

Limit distractions for the explosive search by removing civilians and excess military from the building.

If possible, MWDs sweep the route to the building.

HASTY/DELIBERATE CHECKPOINT

Establish security.

Initial handler position is secure; handler can see and control dog at distance.

For initial screening (if conducted), offset vehicles to allow for security and control of MWD from a distance. Civilians may remain in vehicles for initial screening.

MWD team approaches vehicles from downwind.

MWD team sweeps Hasty VCP area prior to establishment, using area sweep techniques.

Eliminate distractors from the search area. Consider dog temperament before allowing any interaction with civilians. MWD handlers may require civilians to remove items from the vehicle. Prior to relocating occupants to a safe area, ensure vehicle engine is off, vehicle in park, and all compartments/doors/windows/trunk/hood are open. When the vehicle is ready and the civilians removed, the MWD team may conduct a deliberate search. Upon positive response, the MWD team moves to secure position and unit C-IED procedures are initiated.

CORDON and SEARCH/KNOCK

Patrol MWDs may be used with the reserve or cordon to apprehend evaders and prevent reinforcement.

Leaders must weigh the advantage of using MWDs against the inconvenience to the population.

MWDs may be used to sweep cordon positions and assist with crowd control.

Unit leaders may use MWDs in all elements (cordon, search, reserve) of the cordon and search/knock. If done sequentially, the MWD may be used in multiple elements. Cordon and search/knock operations involve close interaction with civilians, therefore care should be given to MWD interaction with these civilians. MWDs normally search points (see *Point Search*), areas (see *Area Sweep*), vehicles (see *Hasty/Deliberate Checkpoint*), and buildings (see *Building Search*) within the search area. Unit commanders direct the MWD team sequence of search. The MWD handler coordinates the method of search (on-/off-leash) for the different objectives and distributes this information to all affected elements.

ROUTE CLEARANCE PATROL/RECON (Vehicle)

Controllable distance

Unit conducts 5-25 checks. MWD team participates.

Vehicles provide additional over-watch.

Once security is established, the handler directs the MWD to search to a controllable distance.

- Box method: crosses the road and returns, searching the other side.
- Verge method: searches one side of the road at a time.
- Based on METT-TC, the handler may use a different search method.

Repeat searches may be required based on road width/type. Once the road is searched, the convoy advances to the cleared point and halts, repeating the process as necessary.

If the MWD alerts, the MWD is called back and the unit conducts C-IED procedures. The speed of the advance is based on the MWD's capabilities.

MWD teams usually travel in a vehicle near the front of the convoy. Once the convoy is stopped, the MWD team deploys with its security team.