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Problems Arising when Dog Handlers with Service Dogs are Engaged in Security Procedures in Penitentiary Institutions of the Russian Federation

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Abstract

Introduction: the article is devoted to the identification of problems that arise when engaging specialist dog handlers with service dogs in carrying out security procedures in the territories of institutions of the penal system of the Russian Federation. *Purpose:* to show problems of using dog handlers with service dogs during security procedures in penitentiary institutions, to formulate directions for their possible solution. *Methods:* general scientific (analysis, synthesis, induction, etc.), private scientific and special methods of cognition (comparative legal, sociological, statistical, legal modeling). *Results:* the analysis of data obtained during the survey of 2,217 employees in 2023 made it possible to formulate problems that arise when involving dog handlers with service dogs in security procedures, as well as make proposals to improve the mechanism of interaction between cynological and security units. *Conclusions:* the involvement of dog handlers is an effective measure to deter illegal actions on the part of the suspected, accused and convicted persons. The main problems that arise during activities under consideration are the insufficient number of dog handlers, as well as the lack of necessary training for both employees and service dogs, taking into account the specifics of service of units of regime and supervision (security) of penitentiary institutions.

Keywords: penitentiary system of the Russian Federation; cynological units; cynological service; dog handler; service dogs; security procedures.

5.1.4. Criminal law sciences (legal sciences).

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Introduction

The Federal Penitentiary Service (FPS of Russia) fulfils a lot of tasks to improve the performance of its institutions and bodies. Ensuring reliable isolation of convicts and persons in custody is one of the main activities of the FPS of Russia, for the implementation of which appropriate units and services have been created in institutions. The cynological service, having an organized management system, performs an important role in the mechanism of ensuring law and order and legality [1, p. 102].

Nowadays, cynological units of penitentiary institutions perform a significant number of official tasks. In accordance with the Instruction on the Organization of the Cynological Service of the Federal Penitentiary Service, approved by the Order of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia No. 336 of April 29, 2005, activities of these units are aimed at protecting institutions, escorting convicts and persons in custody; ensuring law and order and legality, safety of employees of the penal system, officials and citizens located on the territories of institutions; joining intelligence-gathering to search for and detain escaped convicts and persons in custody; detecting narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, explosives, explosive devices, weapons and ammunition. The use of dogs in the official activities of the FPS of Russia is a coordinated and rapid action of a dog handler with a service dog as part of guard and service duties when performing assigned tasks [2, p. 101].

Besides, cynological units train service, organize and conduct breeding work on breeding and rearing service dogs, and ensure timely measures for the care and conservation of service dogs [3, pp. 139–140].

It should be noted that the use of a service dog is important for ensuring safety of both the penitentiary institution and employees [4, p. 65]. In the context of modernization of engineering and technical equipment of protected facilities, introduction of integrated security systems, creation of new detection devices and protective equipment [1, p. 104], the role of man and animal is decreasing. However, in some cases, a dog is a priority means of solving official tasks [5, p. 20]. This is due to the fact that the dog, as

a biological sensor, has a significant number of natural advantages that are not peculiar to any type of technology, which allows it to recognize and respond to emerging incidents in a timely manner [6, p. 324]. In accordance with the Procedure for the Treatment of Service Animals in Institutions and Bodies of the Penitentiary System of the Russian Federation, approved by the Order of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia No. 1,210 of December 31, 2019, as part of a special training course, a service dog is trained to perform tasks in a certain area of service: fugitive retrieval; search for narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors; search for explosives, explosive devices, weapons and ammunition; guard duty. Also, the use of service dogs is a human preventive and deterrent factor, in comparison with weapons. Service dogs have a certain psychological effect on offenders, forcing them to abandon their criminal intentions [7, p. 37]. Cases of using service dogs as a special tool are regulated by Article 30 of the Law of the Russian Federation No. 5473-I of July 21, 1993 "On Institutions and Bodies of the Penal System of the Russian Federation".

These circumstances determine the involvement of dog handlers with service dogs in carrying out security procedures aimed at preventing and suppressing offenses committed in correctional institutions and pre-trial detention centers [8, p. 546]. The use of service dogs makes it possible to increase the reliability of the isolation of convicts and persons in custody, their detention regime, contributing to a decrease in the crime rate in correctional institutions [9, pp. 124–125].

The involvement of dog handlers with service dogs in conducting security procedures is supported by the provisions of departmental regulations, as well as the official necessity caused by the specifics of their activities, skills and abilities to detect certain types of prohibited items, as well as due to the fact that service dogs can deter and prevent the commission of illegal acts by convicts and persons in custody.

In accordance with the provisions of departmental regulatory legal acts, dog handlers with service dogs can be involved in the following activities:

– as part of the duty shift of a correctional institution – when taking over and passing of duties in locked rooms, punishment cells (SHIZO), cell-type rooms (PKT), single cell-type rooms (EPKT), accompanying large groups of convicts during regime events, including when walking to the SHIZO and PKT;

– as part of the search and maneuver group of a correctional institution when checking the territory adjacent to internal and external restricted areas in order to detect mines, caches, caches, and prohibited items. A service dog is used to search for an odor by its carriers or by their source, for some odor carriers by the smell of other carriers, for some objects, substances with a specific odor;

– as part of the duty shift of pre-trial detention centers and prisons when taking a significant number of the accused and convicted persons out for a walk, during the search, at night when opening cells, when escorting the suspected, accused, and convicted persons to prevent crimes and other offenses.

Thus, a significant part of security procedures can be carried out by engaging dog handlers with service dogs. But in practice, the use of dog handlers is limited. This is due, firstly, to a decrease in the number of these employees. So, over the past five years, the number of employees of the cynological service in the staff of security units has decreased by 0.9%, amounting to 9,084 people [10, p. 472] (2018 – 9,163) [11, p. 257], while the actual number has declined by 5.4%, amounting to 8,011 people [10, p. 473] (2018 – 8,468) [11, p. 258]. What is more, despite the consolidation of tasks for this category of employees, the procedure for their involvement in conducting security procedures is not defined by law. In practice, there are still questions on the affiliation of dog handlers to a specific department, subordination when conducting security procedures, etc.

These circumstances determine the existence of problems in the field under consideration, the elimination of which is possible by conducting research work aimed at analyzing information on the involvement of dog handlers with service dogs during security procedures in the territories of penitentiary institutions.

The purpose of the study is to collect, study and analyze information on the use of dog handlers with service dogs during security procedures in the territories of institutions of the FPS of Russia.

The methodological basis of the research consists of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, induction, etc.), private scientific and special methods of cognition (comparative legal, sociological, statistical, legal modeling).

Research

As part of the analysis of the current state of official activities of dog handlers with service dogs during security procedures in the territories of penitentiary institutions in 2023, employees from all territorial bodies of the FPS of Russia were surveyed.

2,217 employees were involved in the survey, of which 1,401 – employees of the regime and supervision departments, 816 – employees of protection divisions, namely:

- duty assistants to the heads of correctional facilities (DPNK) – 883 people;
- duty assistants to the heads of pre-trial detention centers (DPSI) – 276 people;
- heads of security departments in correctional institutions – 178 people;
- heads of regime and supervision departments in pre-trial detention centers – 64 people;
- deputy heads of institutions – heads of protection divisions in correctional institutions – 328 people;
- deputy heads of institutions – heads of protection divisions in pre-trial detention centers – 117 people;
- heads of cynological departments (groups) in correctional institutions – 272 people;
- heads of cynological departments (groups) in pre-trial detention centers – 99 people.

As part of the study, the issue of effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in security procedures was studied and the opinions of employees of the regime and supervision departments on this issue were analyzed. To do this, we asked the question, “What types of security procedures will benefit from the involvement of a dog handler with a service dog?” (figures 1–9).

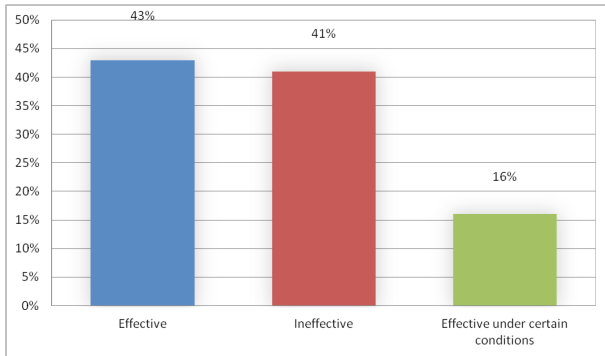


Figure 1. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in taking over and passing of duties

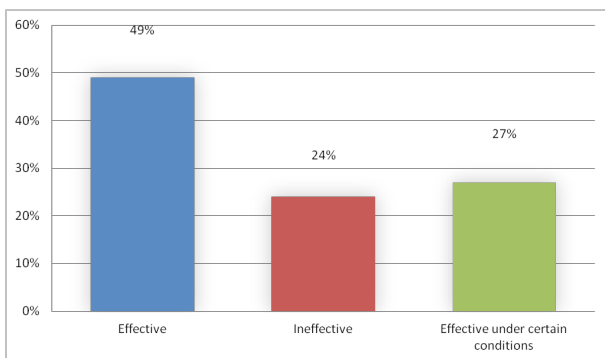


Figure 2. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs during a walk

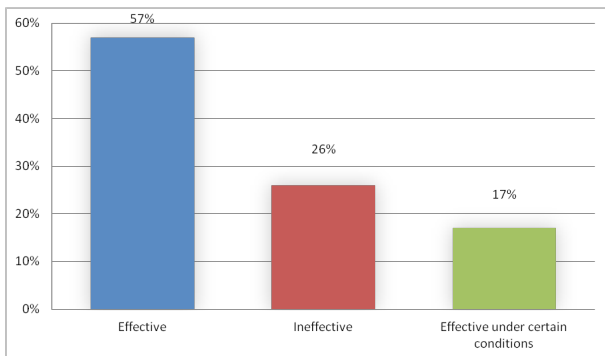


Figure 3. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs during lights out and wakeup

The involvement of dog handlers with service dogs in service procedures in locked rooms, detention centers, and PKT is most often considered by respondents as an effective measure (figures 1–3). At the same time, more than half of the respondents (57%) believe it important to engage dog handlers with service dogs during lights out and wakeup. Opinions on the

effectiveness of engaging them in taking over and passing of duties are divided (Figure 1). Thus, 43% of the surveyed support the idea, and 41% do not find it reasonable.

Let us consider effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in patrolling the inner restricted area, as part of a search and maneuver group, and inspecting parcels and transfers (figures 4–6).

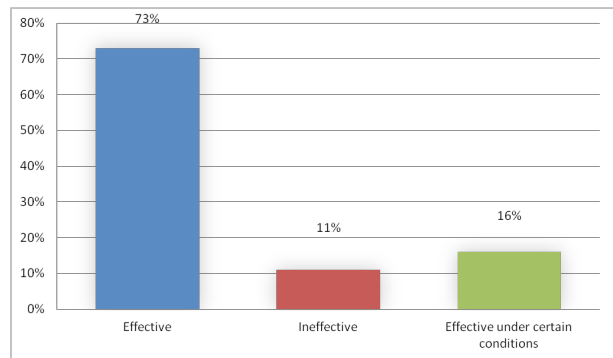


Figure 4. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in patrolling the internal restricted area

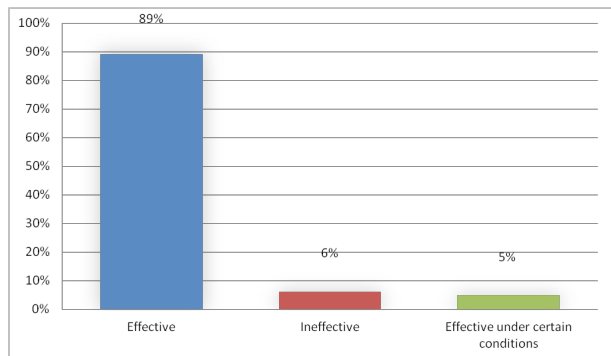


Figure 5. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging specialist dog handlers with service dogs in activities of search and maneuver groups

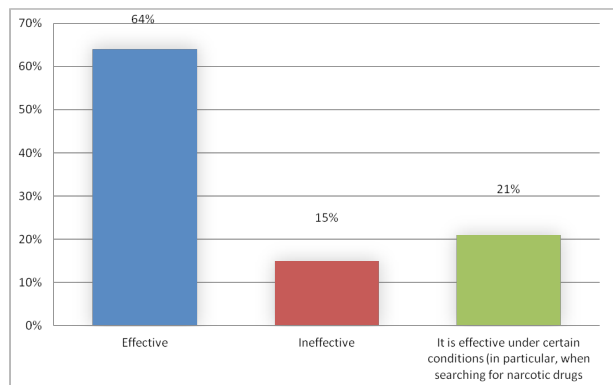


Figure 6. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging specialist dog handlers with service dogs in inspecting parcels and transfers

Figures 7–9 show data on the effectiveness of using dog handlers with service dogs as part of the duty shift of a pre-trial detention center.

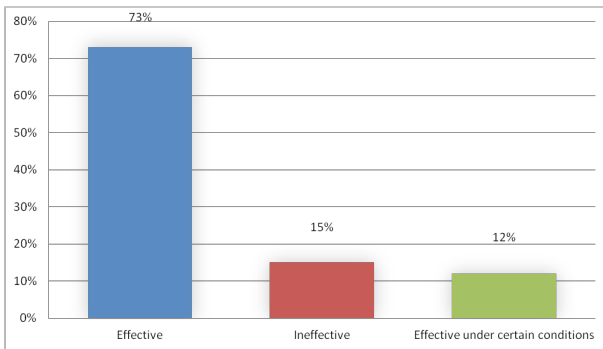


Figure 7. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs when opening cameras at night

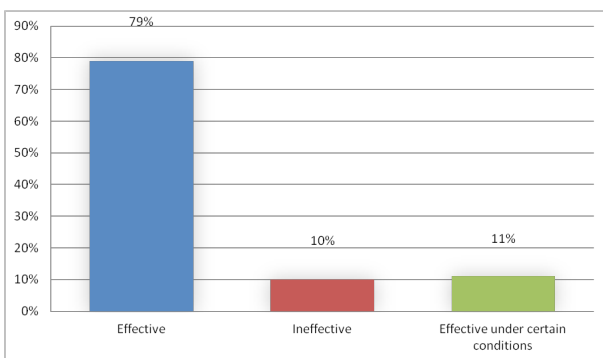


Figure 8. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in conducting searches in cells

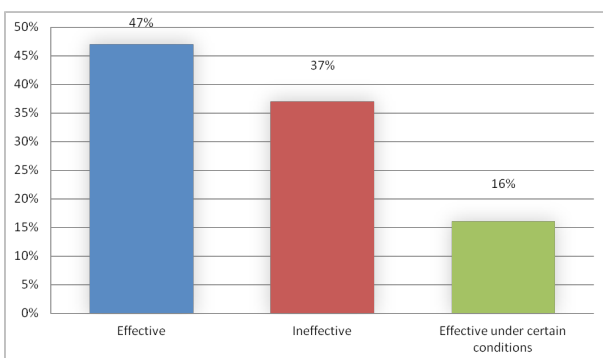


Figure 9. Opinions of employees of penitentiary institutions on the effectiveness of engaging dog handlers with service dogs in organizing convicts' walks as part of the duty shift

Thus, employees of penitentiary institutions believe it important to attract dog handlers with service dogs to certain types of security procedures. Their work will be useful during lights out and wakeup in cells, SHIZO, PKT, EPKT (57%),

when patrolling the internal restricted area (73%), as part of a search and maneuver group (89%), when inspecting parcels and transfers (64%), opening cameras at night (73%), and conducting searches in cells (79%).

As part of the survey, employees were asked to formulate problematic issues that arise when involving dog handlers with service dogs in conducting security procedures. This question was addressed to employees of both protection divisions and regime and supervision departments of penitentiary institutions. Here are their answers:

1) according to employees of protection divisions, problematic issues are the following:

- search (patrol and search) dogs are not trained to search for narcotic drugs;
- poor organization of security procedures;
- suspects, defendants, convicts from among believers who profess Islam express dissatisfaction with the use of service dogs in cells;
- absence of places of temporary detention of service dogs and places of dislocation for dog handlers when they perform official tasks as part of the duty shift;
- an insufficient number of days allocated to attract assigned dog handlers with service dogs to search for narcotic drugs in a particular institution (it is necessary to carry out these activities from Monday to Friday);
- ranking of managers for cynological groups (junior senior staff) has reduced the role of the senior management in the cynological unit responsible for training cynological specialists, dogs assigned to them and maintaining facilities of the educational and material base of cynological units in proper condition;

2) according to employees of regime and supervision departments, problematic issues include:

- a lack of service dogs;
- the inability to use a service dog when inspecting food;
- the failure to comply with security measures when using a service dog in an institution;
- the difficulty to use service dogs as a special tool, the inability to foresee and minimize the degree of damage to health if necessary;
- according to schedules for the use of service dogs in security procedures, dog handlers

can be involved in search operations, inspection of transfers and parcels once a week, which is ineffective;

- aggressive behavior of dogs towards employees and convicts.

Employees were asked to *formulate specific measures that would solve these problems*. Here are the answers received:

1) *protection division employees' proposals to boost effectiveness of the use of service dogs during security procedures:*

- to train service dogs more often according to a special course;

- to upgrade the educational and material base of facilities for the maintenance of service dogs;

- to organize experience exchange between institutions of both a specific territorial body of the FPS of Russia and institutions of other subjects of the Russian Federation;

- to organize experience exchange between penitentiary institutions and other departments and services in the use and training of dogs;

- to provide additional classes with dog handlers;

- to organize interaction with operational security services;

- conduct additional training of dog handlers as “defendants” to ensure better training of service dogs for “protective guard service”.

It should be noted that some employees expressed a point of view that the use of service dogs in security procedures is impractical due to the increase in the volume of service, as well as the use of search and patrol service dogs in most institutions;

2) *proposals for enhancing effectiveness of the use of service dogs during security procedures received from employees of regime and supervision departments:*

- to increase the number of hours for dog training;

- to improve training of service dogs in the search for narcotic drugs;

- to more often attract dog handlers with service dogs to participating in security measures;

- to organize practical training with service dogs in places where security procedures are carried out;

- to ensure that a dog handler with a service dog is on duty on a day-to-day basis and subordinate the DPNU;

- to place imitators of prohibited substances during security procedures to check the quality of service of a dog handler and the effectiveness of the use of a service dog;

- to develop a regulatory legal framework on the procedure for the use of service dogs during routine events.

Conclusion

To sum it up, we can state the following:

1) involvement of dog handlers with service dogs in conducting security procedures is an effective measure to deter illegal actions on the part of suspected, accused and convicted persons, as well as meet requirements of the established procedure for serving sentences;

2) not all duties assigned to dog handlers by departmental regulatory legal acts are performed on the territory of institutions due to objective circumstances expressed in the absence of employees and service dogs necessary for their performance;

3) even if there is a necessary number of dog handlers with service dogs, there is a need for their additional training, taking into account the specifics of service of the regime and supervision departments.

To solve the problems that arise when engaging dog handlers with service dogs in security procedures, we propose the following:

- the position of dog handlers in the “group for conducting security procedures” as part of the cynological unit of the institution’s security department should be included in the staffing table;

- dog handlers should be part of the duty shift, though they should not be involved during the service in measures to protect institutions and perform functions and duties unusual for him;

- it is possible to solve the problem of assigning dog handlers with a significant number of official tasks by involving them in conducting security procedures at the order of the DPNU, based on real needs of the institution;

- a job description for this category of employees should have a provision on knowledge of tasks of the duty shift, a procedure for the use of a service dog, places and objects vulnerable to escape located in a fifteen-meter strip adjacent to the internal restricted area.

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