



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

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ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Aviation Security — Policy:

TRAINING AND EVALUATION MANUAL FOR CANINE UNITS (K-9)

(Presented by the Dominican Republic)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This information paper presents the Training and Evaluation Manual for Canine Units (K-9), developed by the Dominican Republic, for the awareness of other States. This initiative aims to share best practices in the use of K-9 units as an effective method for the detection of explosives in airport facilities.	
<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goal <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None. No additional resources are required for the implementation of the programme.
<i>References:</i>	- ICAO Doc 8973, Aviation Security Manual - Training and Evaluation Manual for Canine Units (K-9)

¹ English and Spanish versions provided by the Dominican Republic.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The use of canines for the detection of explosive devices dates back to the end of the Second World War. However, the first documented instance of specific olfactory training for search purposes occurred during the First World War (Katz, 1994). At that time, German forces developed a rudimentary tracking method known as brinzel, wherein the dog would locate the wounded on the battlefield and return to the base with a signal on its collar, later guiding medical personnel to the location.

1.2 Beginning in 1947, the United Kingdom systematically employed explosive detection dogs, recognizing their tactical and strategic value in military operations. Over time, this practice expanded to other States and became a vital tool in combating acts of unlawful interference, particularly in the airport environment.

1.3 In this regard, the ICAO Aviation Security Manual (Doc 8973) encourages the use of canine units as part of surveillance, deterrence, and detection measures at airports, recognizing them as an effective method for trace explosive detection.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The development of the Training and Evaluation Manual for Canine Units (K-9) would benefit all Member States by establishing consistent criteria and procedures in an official document. While many States already use canine units, approaches and methodologies vary significantly. For this reason, the Dominican Republic is making this manual available as a reference tool to promote the harmonization of best practices in this field.

2.2 The manual includes selection criteria to determine whether a canine is suitable for explosive trace detection tasks. It also outlines the specific training process for their deployment in various airport areas.

2.3 In addition, the manual covers considerations related to the retirement of canine units after the end of their useful working life, whether due to age, medical conditions, behavioral issues (such as timidity or aggression), lack of aptitude, loss of sense of smell, or other factors that may impair their performance.

2.4 The full Manual is available at the following link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yvg6YIUfFaS9VRt3MDTi4y4Tc7CiJg3jJ/view?usp=sharing>