

7 May 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR HQ AFSFC/SFOP

FROM: 341 TRS/CC  
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341 TRS/SGV  
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Lackland AFB TX 78236-5619

SUBJECT: Military Working Dog Adoption Report Calendar Year 2001

References: (a) PL 106-446 Amendment to Title 10 U.S. Code. Military Working Dogs: Transfer and adoption at the end of useful life.  
(b) DoD Veterinary Service Activity Memo, Subject: Moratorium on Euthanasia of Military Working dogs, dtd 12 Dec 00  
(c) DoD Veterinary Service Activity Memo, Subject: Adoption of Military Working Dogs, dtd 16 Aug 01  
(d) Military Working Dog Adoption Packet

1. This memorandum transmits the initial Military Working Dog (MWD) Adoption Report for CY 2001 from the 341<sup>st</sup> Training Squadron (341 TRS) through channels to the Secretary of Defense IAW PL106-446 (reference a). Although the information contained in this report is unclassified, it should not be released outside of official DoD channels prior to its submission by the Secretary of Defense to Congress.

2. Adoptions: There were 53 former MWDs adopted or transferred during CY 01. Of these, private individuals (former handlers or others capable of humanely caring for the former MWDs) adopted 33, and 20 were transferred from DoD to other government law enforcement agencies. At year's end there were 35 MWDs that had completed the disposition process and were judged to be eligible for adoption, but had not as yet been adopted. During CY 01 a total of 107 MWDs had been humanely euthanized to prevent suffering caused by debilitating medical conditions or because of dangerously aggressive behavior (see Atch 5 for reasons for euthanasia). Of these, seven MWDs that were originally judged as eligible for adoption were euthanized after acute deterioration in their medical conditions rendered them medically ineligible for adoption. In one case the MWD-accountable unit was unable to place a former MWD that was eligible for adoption. That MWD was subsequently euthanized. Three MWDs were euthanized for unresolvable behavioral problems. An additional 19 MWDs died of natural causes. The total number of MWDs leaving service for all categories (adoptions, transfers, humane euthanasia, and natural deaths) was 216. This number is consistent with the number of working dogs leaving service over the last several years.

3. Background: Following the President's signing of Public Law 106-446, a DoD-wide moratorium was initiated to (reference b) to assure that adoption-eligible MWDs were not euthanized during the time between enactment of the law and the implementation of standard guidelines for medical and behavioral screening. Medical criteria and screening procedures (reference c) were developed to help attending veterinarians and commanders of MWD-accountable units in the field determine when a particular MWD could safely and comfortably transition to pet status (i.e. medically and behaviorally eligible for adoption). During the moratorium MWDs were only euthanized when unrelentingly painful or terminal medical conditions were diagnosed or when there was well-documented evidence of dangerously aggressive behavior. In these cases the DoD Military Working Dog Veterinary Service at Lackland AFB determined that euthanasia of MWDs was necessary following a careful determination for each dog that he/she was medically and/or behaviorally ineligible for adoption.

4. In an effort to protect the public and assure a safe environment for former MWDs the 341 TRS developed checklists and procedures for use by MWD-accountable unit commanders to screen MWDs and individuals interested in adopting MWDs. After developing the adoption process, the 341 TRS tested it by serving as the adopting unit for the first and second MWD adoptees. This checklist and other forms necessary for MWD adoption (reference d) were distributed to the field in May 2001 and are currently available on the 341 TRS website: <https://DODMWD.lackland.af.mil>. Since May, commanders of MWD-accountable units have been responsible for completing MWD adoptions with the assistance of veterinarians and trainers at the 341 TRS.

5. Point of contact for this correspondence is the Director of the DOD MWD VS, Colonel Larry Carpenter, US Army Veterinary Corps (210-671-3991 or DSN 473-3991).

//signed//  
JOHN W. PROBST, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF  
Commander

LARRY G. CARPENTER, Colonel, USA  
Director, DoD Military Working Dog Vet Service

Attachments:

1. PL 106-446 Amendment to Title 10 U.S. Code
2. Moratorium
3. Adoption of MWDs
4. Adoption Packet
5. Euthanasia Spreadsheet