

Current Developments

When the Police Dog Services training program was first established, the training period ranged from nine to twelve months, explains Insp. Fream. To supplement the original program an annual refresher course of two weeks duration was later introduced. Training methods and techniques were gradually modified and refined. The refresher course has been replaced with an annual validation workshop and a seminar lasting up to three days.

Insp. Fream stresses the importance of keeping abreast of current developments in police dog work and training methods:

"We constantly strive to ameliorate our program. The knowledge and experience of our trainers is basic to this effort. This collective quest for improvement by our trainers and trainees is complemented by trainers' meetings in which their experience is pooled to resolve specific concerns with an eye to the program as a whole.

"The training centre at Innisfail is in continuous contact with other handlers and agencies in Canada and the United States regarding training methods and techniques. This contact ranges from personal relationships established by a trainer over the years, to formal agency contacts at the program level. Field dog handlers are encouraged to share their experiences with the training centre at any time. Personal contact is also made during the annual validations."

The training staff also keeps up to date with developments in dog training through trade publications.

Profiles and Levels in Training

Improvements have been made to all courses offered by the Force with the introduction of "course training standards" which identify all training objectives, goals, and procedures. With the introduction of these standards the dog handler training course was extended from fourteen to sixteen weeks, or eighty working days. These

OBSTACLE COURSE The agility profile is an important part of the Police Dog Services' basic training program.

