



2019: a police officer dog handler instructor with a service dog, detecting the cause of a fire.

A training course with decoys was carried out for the first time in 2011, but the dog had been trained to work with decoys for some time before. Training to detect people in vehicles started in 2002. For some time, dogs were also trained to guide the blind.

The first successfully trained dog specialist for finding drugs was Rex, a German Shepherd, in 1972, and the first domestic dog for the detection of explosives was trained in 1977. The school later developed a number of new training programmes: for the detection of weapons, tobacco products (2010), the search for bodies (2013), the detection of biological traces, blood, seminal fluid (2014) and the detection of the origin of fire (2017).

In the autumn of 2017, the first two dogs to detect the origin of fire were trained in the Bavarian police, together with their instructor. Bree, a Malinois dog, and Fago, a German Shorthaired Pointer, were trained to find seven different flammable substances, each at a concentration of 100, 75 and 50 per cent, which enables them to also detect substances the smell of which has already changed due to evaporation during burning.



Around 1977: a service dog – a guide for the blind.



2012: children from Kindergarten Jelka visiting the Police Academy, Tacen.

In addition to training dogs and their handlers for work in the police and other state bodies, the Service Dogs Training Section is also responsible for study materials, formal acts, selection, purchase and breeding of service dogs, and also carries out medical care for dogs with the Section's veterinary clinic.

In addition to all the tasks, it also plays an important role in the preventive and promotional activities of the police, as it is often said that well organised police can be recognised by the fact that their composition includes a cavalry, trained dogs and their own museum.



1980: militiamen dog handlers with service dogs at the parade in Ljubljana, in the front is Jože Selan.

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70 YEARS OF THE SERVICE DOGS TRAINING 1949-2019



Around 2005: action drill (inspection of the building) Special units, Gotenica.

Service dogs have long been indispensable associates of police officers in providing safety and carrying out the most demanding police tasks.

Police dogs help in rescue missions, in the search for missing and wanted persons, prevention and investigation of crime, they help detect illicit drugs, explosives and various substances, ensure public order, control the state border and perform other tasks, both in Slovenia and elsewhere. They can even be seen in police suits, wearing bulletproof vests and special shoes.

Police dogs and their handlers work in the field, within the framework of different police units, and their work is very complex and diverse; therefore, training is of extreme importance for both of them. Training is carried out by a Police Academy department, which has been operating continuously for 70 years under various names. This high anniversary marks the rich history of the collective and individuals who, with their professional and diligent work, have significantly influenced the development of cynology in Slovenia and have built a reputation of our special police associates (dogs and their handlers), which they enjoy on an international scale.



2019: veterinary clinic of the Service Dogs Training Section.

In 1949, the first school for the systematic training of police dogs began to operate in Slovenia, at Vodnikova cesta 62 in Ljubljana, under the Ministry of the Interior. The first 9-month course was attended by 12 militiamen who were trained as service dog handlers with lectures and practical training.

Despite the modest beginnings, marked by the lack of adequate staff, dogs, knowledge and equipment of the facilities, the dog school of the Slovenian police quickly gained reputation and became the leading school in this field in the former Yugoslavia.

The spatial situation improved in 1954, when the school moved from an area where barking disturbed the surrounding inhabitants to newly built dedicated facilities in Podutik. The school acquired even more modern facilities in 2008 when it moved to Gmajnice, where it still operates today.



2019: a police officer dog handler instructor and police officer dog handler candidate training a young police dog, Gmajnice.

Since its establishment, the school has repeatedly bred its own litter because of the lack of suitable dogs, which was a big step in the development of service dogs. Currently, the school breeds German Shepherds and German Shorthaired Pointers.

The Slovenian police now have approximately 180 dogs. Most of them are German Shepherds, which are still considered to be the kings of police dogs. In addition to these, other dog breeds in the police are also Malinois dogs, Rottweilers, Dutch Shepherds, German Shorthaired Pointers, Terriers and other breeds. A pedigree was never a prerequisite in the selection of police dogs; what is important is the characteristics of the dog, which show up on numerous tests.

The condition for somebody to become a police dog handler is to have at least two years of experience with police work in the field, a completed three-day test and a successfully completed five-month basic training programme.



2019: an inspection of the forest exercise involving a service dog with a muzzle.

With the adjustment of dogs to police work, school training programmes have also changed – from general to specialist programmes. Dogs were first trained for tracking, defence, detecting perpetrators of criminal and minor offences and finding missing persons and objects, and subsequently for detecting various substances.

In 1951, police dogs training instructors in collaboration with the Mountain Rescue Service and cynologists from various cynological associations began to organise courses on finding people in avalanches.

Shortly after the Slovenian militia got its first helicopter, dog handlers and service dogs began to be trained for tasks that included the work of the police air support unit.

The first training on searching for people trapped under rubble was organised in 1977. In the years 1987–1991, the militia led by Anton Es from the service dogs school even led the rescue from under the rubble.

Training of dogs to search for people in the field and in the facilities was introduced in 1975, and muzzle began to be introduced for work, to prevent serious injuries and ensure a more friendly use of dogs.



1949: training - the patrol of the People's Militia with Milan Černilogar, Jože Selan and a dog Činč, checking the identity of alleged perpetrators and examining them (Tomo Vajt and Viktor Volk).



1952: avalanche rescue training in Tamar, in the foreground is the instructor Janez Klemenčič.



Around 1970: a dog handler militiaman of the People's Militia from Slovenia with a service dog at the International Competition in Udine, Italy.



Between 1967 and 1984: training in Brnik.