

# **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CYNOLOGICAL SERVICE OF THE CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES OF BELARUS**

## **СТАНОВЛЕНИЕ КИНОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ СЛУЖБЫ ТАМОЖЕННЫХ ОРГАНОВ БЕЛАРУСИ**

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Cynology is the science about dogs, breeding their varieties, training and the history of the origin of dogs.

The dogs in the police service were mentioned for the first time at the beginning of the twentieth century. They were Dobermans, which were used as tracking dogs in Germany. In Russia dogs began to be used during the Russo-Japanese War – German shepherds and collies brought the wounded from the battlefield. By the beginning of 1914 there were about 150 dogs in the Russian Czar's Army. Among them there were German shepherds, Dobermanns and Airedale terriers. Unfortunately, after the revolution of 1917 and the Civil War in Russia, there were very few dogs of service breeds.

The cynologists of the customs authorities of the Republic of Belarus have been following their traditions since 1925, when the administration of the Western customs district decided to create a school of dog handlers. On June 16, 1925, the courses for passenger car attendants of service tracking dogs were opened in Puhovichi. In 1988, the cynological service of the customs authorities of the USSR was recreated. It consisted of 2 groups of cynologists and service dogs. Each of them, consisting of 25 cynologists with dogs, attended training courses either in England or Germany to improve their skills. After the collapse of the USSR, the Republic of Belarus was one of the last countries, that created its cynological service.

In 2001, according to the decree of the State Customs Committee, the department of the cynological service was introduced into the structure of Minsk central customs. For several years the department of the cynological service of Minsk Central Customs was the only department of the cynological service of the customs authorities in the Republic of Belarus. In 2005 the department of cynological service was also introduced at the customs house "Western Bug", in 2006 – in Mozyr customs. Before 2008 cynological services in all other customs offices of the Republic of Belarus did not act as independent departments, but they worked as part of anti-smuggling departments and departments combating administrative customs offenses.

Today the cynological service of the customs authorities of the Republic of Belarus includes 6 departments of the cynological service, two groups of

cynologists in the operational divisions of customs and the chair of cynologists of the educational institution "the State Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining of Customs Authorities of the Republic of Belarus" [3].

Service dogs (German shepherds, malinois) or hunting breeds of dogs (labradors, spaniels, terriers) are used by customs authorities. Dogs of decorative breeds are not used as there are certain requirements they can't meet. A dog should be unpretentious to various working and living conditions, loyal to people and other animals. To work at the airport, the size of a dog is also important, because in general people are afraid of big dogs.

The training of dogs begins when a cynologist takes a puppy. Usually it takes about 3-4 months. In general dogs serve up to 8 years. A cynologist with the dog are sent for the initial training to the educational institution "the State Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining of Customs Authorities of the Republic of Belarus" and they are annually retrained there.

Service dogs carry out the tasks to search and detect narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, as well as other goods illegally transported across the customs border of the Eurasian Economic Union in the Republic of Belarus. Service dogs can be used at all checkpoints located in the field of activity of the customs authorities of the Republic of Belarus.

In the first half of 2017 cynologists independently, as well as in cooperation with other structural subdivisions of customs and law enforcement authorities of the Republic of Belarus, prevented about 52 attempts of illegal movement, storage or use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

In May 2017, a training seminar of cynological subdivisions of customs authorities of the Republic of Belarus was organized and conducted on the basis of customs Minsk-2 and the objects of "the State Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining of Customs Authorities of the Republic of Belarus" within the framework of the visit of experts from the Training Cynologists Center of the Belgian Federal Police [3].

In order to improve the quality of cynological units of customs authorities, Belarusian cynologists regularly interact and share their experience with foreign colleagues.

The activities of the cynological service of the customs authorities contribute greatly to achievement of positive results in the fight against the spread of narcotic drugs, psychotropic and explosive substances in Belarus.

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