
MILITARY VETERINARY SERVICES



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Foreword

Although the US Army Veterinary Corps has been an integral component of the US Army Medical Department since June 3, 1916, the history and contributions of veterinary support to military operations extends back to our country's inception. I would like to congratulate every author for contributing to the first textbook in this series of *Textbooks of Military Medicine* to capture the unique aspects of military veterinary service support. In my responsibility to provide veterinary services throughout the Department of Defense, it gives me great pride to sponsor this distinctive textbook, one that elucidates the significant impact military veterinary services continue to have on the health of our Army, our Department of Defense, and our Nation.

This textbook highlights the overlapping mission pillars of the veterinary services—food protection; animal health; veterinary public health; and support to research, development, training and education—all of which contribute daily to the overall readiness of our Army and the Department of Defense. Through performance of these missions, the Army Veterinary Service supports the following four strategic themes and ensures that Army Medicine will remain a vibrant organization, contributing to our Nation's security:

- **Readiness and Health:** Army Veterinary Service personnel and the services they provide maintain, restore, and improve the deployability, resiliency, and performance of service members through a variety of programs. They prevent zoonotic diseases such as rabies; provide food safety and defense services; and support research and development that delivers the latest material solutions to save the lives of Service Members and Department of Defense Civilians in addition to enhancing and maintaining their health in all operational environments.
- **Healthcare Delivery:** Our veterinary service is entrusted with diverse animal health missions that cross service branches and including military working dog care for all services, the US Navy marine mammal program, and a variety of working equine programs. Our animal health programs provide a continuum of care from the battlefield, through referral centers, to rehabilitative care at the world-renowned Lieutenant Colonel Daniel E. Holland Military Working Dog Hospital.
- **Force Development:** Army Veterinary Service personnel currently serve in both Active and Reserve Component veterinary detachments as well as Special Operation units of multiple services, providing the highest level of military veterinary support and expertise. These ready and deployable expeditionary veterinary assets serve as the center of gravity for the Army Veterinary Services.
- **Taking Care of Ourselves, Soldiers for Life, & DA Civilians:** Army veterinary service personnel ensure the safety of food to optimize the health and resilience of Families and retirees. They also support the human-animal bond and provide high quality veterinary care for Family-owned animals.

In short, the mission of the US Army Veterinary Service is to provide responsive and reliable military veterinary services; improve readiness and resilience positively and proactively; and advance the overall health of humans, animals, and the environment. As we look to the future operational environment, our Veterinary Service will continue to maintain, restore, and improve readiness; save lives; and advance wellness of all our partners while strengthening the health of our Nation through the continued provision of the exemplary veterinary services represented in this textbook.

One Team, One Purpose . . . conserving the fighting strength since 1775!

Lieutenant General Nadja Y. West, MD
The Surgeon General
US Army

Washington, DC
February 2019

Preface

As the 25th Chief of the US Army Veterinary Corps, I would like to dedicate this textbook to all those who have preceded me, all those who are currently serving, as well as all those who will serve in the future, making continued excellence in veterinary services possible throughout the Department of Defense. As the Surgeon General mentioned, this is the first textbook that addresses the practice of military veterinary services and support by the Veterinary Corps and the Veterinary Service (eg, food protection, animal health, and research and development).

The US Army Veterinary Corps is comprised of our officers, both veterinarians and warrants, and is represented by the caduceus with a black V. The US Army Veterinary Service is comprised of several outstanding groups of personnel: our officers, previously mentioned; our enlisted soldiers, both animal care specialists and veterinary food inspection specialists; and our civilians, who span the professional spectrum from administrators to veterinarians. The Veterinary Service is represented by a distinctive insignia; its banner foundation, which reads "Knowledge and Integrity," is crowned with a unicorn, symbolizing the uniqueness of our veterinary practice.

On June 3, 1916, the National Defense Authorization Act of 1916 created the US Army Veterinary Corps and placed all its personnel with the Army Medical department, making us an early model for the more modern health initiative. Prior to the 1916 act, all Army veterinary personnel had only served with the Cavalry, Artillery, or Quartermaster Corps. Our unique Department of Defense mission is represented by the green cross, which distinguishes us from the five other Army Medical Department corps serving under the red cross. (Veterinary personnel are not considered "protected" personnel under the Geneva Conventions because veterinary forces were the only armed medical personnel on the battlefield during World War I.)

Our first chapter is a concise history of our profession, which has transformed over time to support the changing needs of our military. Our primary animal care mission evolved from horses to dogs and is coupled with our constant mission of food protection and our ever-expanding support of research, development, testing, and evaluation. Our subsequent chapters capture the wide scope of practice provided by our specialists in veterinary preventive medicine, laboratory animal medicine, veterinary pathology, clinical specialties, and PhD research. Our food protection programs fall within the field of veterinary preventive medicine and encompass food safety (unintentional food contamination) and the emerging field of food defense (defense against intentional food contamination). Veterinary preventive medicine also supports irregular operations, including our veterinary support of stability operations. Our animal health programs provide healthcare not only for military working dogs and other government-owned animals, but also for family-owned animals. This broad spectrum of care offers critical support to the Army Family Covenant and to the Surgeon General's initiatives concerning the health of the military service members and civilians living on our supported installations and the well-being of all our global partners.

I am particularly pleased with the timing of this textbook's publication, first printed at a time when the long-lasting combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan seem to be coming to an end. This book recognizes the Veterinary Service's significant contributions and exemplary service since the horrific acts of September 11, 2001. Even as current combat operations may diminish, the Veterinary Corps and Veterinary Service will continue to make significant and long-lasting contributions to any future operations vital to our nation's security and health.

Thank you to our authors for taking time to share their expertise and knowledge about the truly unique—and, sometimes, less understood—practice of veterinary medicine.

John L. Poppe
Brigadier General, US Army
Chief, Veterinary Corps

Fort Sam Houston, Texas
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