

COMMUNICATIONS AT GALLIPOLI

Introduction Statement

The way people communicated at Gallipoli during WW1 was primitive. Both Allies used many techniques to communicate, from animals to paper and many more. All of these ways of communication had problems and obstacles of their own that the soldiers, troops and men of Gallipoli had to resolve to keep everything running smoothly.

How did they communicate?

The troops at Gallipoli, WW1 used many different techniques of communication, to keep in touch with headquarters and other troops. The most common form of communication at Gallipoli was by telephone. Another method of communication the troops at Gallipoli used were animals, messenger pigeons were used at Gallipoli at the front line where there were no telephone lines. Troops also used messenger "War dogs" which were dogs with a container around their collar containing a message inside. There was also the job of a runner. When a runner had been sent from the front line to the beach to deliver a message they would have to jump across the trenches because it would take too long to go through them, therefore the average life span of a runner was 24 hours.

What were the obstacles to communication?

During WW1 at Gallipoli, troops had all different types of ways to communicate. Although they came across obstacles and difficulties when communicating. Communication by telephone was one of the most common ways of communication at Gallipoli, but telephone lines were few and basic. Enemy troops would often cut telephone lines by blowing them up, and field telephone lines often broke down and it would take days for them to be fixed, stopping very important messages being delivered. Some messages would never be delivered because a runner would be shot while delivering the message, or a pigeon or war dog would get overwhelmed by all the noise and confusion and go off in the wrong direction. All of these problems made it harder for the messages and communications to be delivered or continued at Gallipoli.



Two New Zealand signalers at Gallipoli, WW1 using a portable field telephone.



Communications trench at Gallipoli WW1.

Where and when did they communicate?

Communications at Gallipoli were done at a communications trench, each alliance had their own communications trench. The ANZAC communication dugout in the communications trench was measuring 5 feet, by 6 feet and 5 feet high. At Gallipoli there was not much time for communication while in battle, if you were at the front line there was no time for communication, the only communication from the front line was from the general officer, asking for more supplies and weapons. Personal communication to loved ones would be done in your own time in your dugout or in the communications trench.

What type of messages were sent?

During WW1 at Gallipoli both allies had many different ways of communicating, because there were so many messages to be sent. These types of messages included reports from the front line asking for more ammunition or soldiers, because so many had died. There were also messages from soldiers to their loved ones. For a soldier to receive a message from their loved ones it would take up to several weeks. The letters from men who had been killed were stamped and sent off to return to the original sender.



Two soldiers releasing a messenger pigeon.

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