

## TASKS & DATA WHEN COMING TO A SEARCH & RESCUE CALL

### Field Team Ops

**Sign in.** The first thing you want to do when you get to a search is sign in. If we don't know you're there, we can't put you on a field team. Then you will be put on a field team.

**Field Team:** A group of people who are working together on a field task to search for a missing person. **(If you are uncomfortable with an assignment and feel you will not be able to actively complete it let the IC know this prior to deployment and you will be reassigned.)**

#### **Members:**

**Field Team Leader:** Usually an FTL . The person responsible for the field team and instructing the team members.

**Radio Operator:** Usually an FTM, this is the person who communicates with base while on a task.

**Medical Officer:** Usually the person with the highest medical training, this is the person who will attend to the subject with the FTL if a find is made.

**Rescue Specialist:** Usually an FTL or experienced FTM, this is the person in charge of coordinating a rescue effort.

When you are on your team, the FTL will show you a map that may contain the:

- **PLS:** Point last seen. This is the last actual visual sighting of the subject.
- **LKP:** Last known position. This may be different from PLS. This is the last place the subject was known to be. Although this can be the same as the PLS, sometimes the last known position is where a clue relating to the subject is found.

#### **Types of field teams:**

1. **Attraction:** Trying to have the subject come to you. Tactics include calling their name, blowing whistles, using sirens, flashing lights, sitting by fires. Can be combined with the other types.
2. **Containment:** Building a wall around the search area to avoid search expansion. Usually done by driving around the search area. This is done early on in a search. Consider trails and camp-ins.
3. **Survey Search:** Looking at an area from above or a distance. This may be from an airplane, a peak, etc...
4. **Reflex Task:** This is the first type of field team that goes out. This is usually a small group (3-7 people) who search high probability areas based on subject profiling.
5. **Hasty Search:** Small group of people searching a linear feature.
6. **Sweep Search (Open Grid):** This is a medium sized group (5-15 people) who search in a line in the search area. They are usually spaced fairly wide apart

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(50 feet or so). This is done throughout the search.

**7. Closed Grid:** This is only used towards the end of a search as a last resort. A line search can be destructive but has a high probability of detection.

**8. Investigative:** A door to door search of only about 3 people who try to gather information on the subject and let the community know that there is a search in progress in their area. You may be asked to pass out flyers.

**9. Dog Team:** The dog handler is the FTL, while you do the land navigation and operate the radio.

**10. Sign cutter:** The sign cutter looks for signs of passage while you do the land navigation and operate the radio.

Things to keep in mind when on a task:

- **Critical Spacing:** The distance apart that field team members should be spread in order to achieve the desired POD. Generally, you should never spread so far apart that you can't see the shoelaces of the people next to you. Your FTL may want you to stand closer together though, depending on the POD he/she is trying to achieve.
- **Align yourself with the person at the end of the line.** If the border of your search area is to the right of the line, you should adjust yourself according to the person to your right. If they turn to the left to follow the side of a stream, everybody needs to turn and maintain their critical spacing.
- **Clue awareness.** There is a much higher chance of finding a clue than finding a subject, but clues are usually much smaller and harder to find than a subject. Clues are very important because they may lead to the subject or greatly reduce the search area. Therefore, when we search, our focus must be on looking for clues. Look up, down, side to side, behind you.
- **Flagging tape.** We use flagging tape to mark clues, search boundaries, and other significant things.
  - Different pieces of tape have different meanings:
    - 1 piece of tape means temporary boundary or cleared road.
    - 2 pieces of tape means permanent boundary.
    - 3 pieces of tape means clue.
    - Remove all tape after the task is complete. ( Secure this location)

**POD:** Probability of detection.

This is really divided into three parts:

1. The probability of finding a responsive subject.
2. The probability of finding an unresponsive subject.
3. The probability of finding clues in a search area.

This is easy to visualize in thinking, "If there were 10 subjects (or 100 milk cartons for clues) in our search area, how many do you think we would have found?" Your FTL will ask you what you thought of your POD after a task.

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### Debriefing:

After the search all teams and associated resources get together to discuss the search. The coordinator will discuss the search and the outcome. This is important as it was a team effort and you will see in this debrief how the entire search went for the team and the subject.

**Sign out:** So we will know that you have left.

Final thoughts:

- Am I well rested ?
- Am I prepared ?
- You can decline, if you feel at all uncomfortable with this responsibility.

### Getting home:

**Do not get in a car with a tired driver!!!!** If you or your driver is too tired to drive, it is much more important to find somebody who can drive for you or to take a nap until you are rested. Please respect this and look out for your fellow searchers. (**Your team members safety comes first do not put yourselves in danger.**)