ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

RED STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 1

EO M224.01 – DESCRIBE IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO TAKE WHEN LOST

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-702/PG-001, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the Instructional Guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TP1 to TP3 to present basic or background material.

An in-class activity was chosen for TP4 as it is an interactive way to reinforce the actions to take when lost, to provoke thought and to stimulate interest among cadets.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to describe the immediate actions to take when lost.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to have the ability to take action when lost as to increase their chances of survival.

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Teaching point 1 **Identify S.T.O.P. Principles**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Read to the cadets the *Cadence* article located at Annex A as the introduction to this TP. This article is intended to grab the cadets' attention and emphasize the importance of the actions to take when lost, highlighting the possibility that any cadet can get lost in the field.

It is important to note the cadet was found because of her training.



Once the article in Annex A has been read to the cadets, open the first part of the lesson by questioning the cadets on the following:

- How did cadet Stephanie Leger become lost?
- What action did she take upon accepting the fact that she was lost?

Answers the cadets provide will not be corrected, however they will be used as a means to get the cadets thinking about what they should do in such a situation. At the end of this TP the previous questions will be asked again to recognize any differences in answers.

Emphasize the importance of the S.T.O.P acronym as the first action to take upon recognition of becoming lost. Follow up this short story with a more detailed explanation of the S.T.O.P acronym with the information provided.

Getting lost can be as simple as leaving a hoochie to go to the latrine and becoming disoriented as experienced by cadet Stephanie Leger, or by following an incorrect compass course on a trek. Once it is determined that one is lost the best thing to do is to stay in one place, keep calm and try to gather information to determine one's location. The first 30 minutes of being lost is when people panic and tend to make the biggest mistakes. Following the acronym S.T.O.P. – Sit, Think, Observe, and Plan will help a lost cadet to think through the situation and make good decisions.

S.T.O.P.

Sit. Sit where you are! Do not panic. Many lost people waste valuable energy and risk injury by panicking – running aimlessly, continuing to travel after dark, or walking in circles. If a lost person decides to wander in an attempt to find their location, in most cases they will become more lost, increasing the distance between the known points of their course. This wandering will only increase the size of the search area, increasing the time it will take for a rescue team to locate an individual. As long as there is no immediate danger, stay in one place.

Think. Think about immediate and future dangers and the factors involved in the situation. Consider the time of day, personal physical condition, and the last time water or food was consumed. Try to list the options that are available to you.

Observe. Observe and listen for the signals of rescuers. Study the immediate environment, determining weather, terrain and resources available. Look around in the immediate area for a shelter location, fresh drinking water, and for clues of the current location.

Plan. Plan the best course of action – maybe it is close to dark and consideration should be given to setting up shelter, finding water or starting a fire. Include how to signal rescuers in the plan.

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Once the S.T.O.P. acronym is understood, ask the following questions again in reference to the *Cadence* article in Annex A.

- How did cadet Stephanie Leger become lost?
- What action did she take upon accepting the fact that she was lost?

The cadets should now have a better understanding of what cadet Leger went through and the actions she took. The anticipated answers are listed below.

- She had wandered from her site and as a result of the approaching nightfall she was unable to find her campsite.
- When she realized she was lost, she followed the acronym S.T.O.P—Sit, Think, Observe, Plan.

Use their new answers and form a correlation between their previous answers. Emphasize again the importance of the S.T.O.P acronym as the first action to take when lost.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. When a person is lost, when do the biggest mistakes generally occur?

Q2. What does the acronym S.T.O.P. mean?

Q3. What should one observe?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. The biggest mistakes occur in the first 30 minutes of being lost.

A2. Sit, Think, Observe and Plan.

A3. When lost, a cadet should observe the immediate environment, weather, terrain and resources available. Look for a shelter location, fresh drinking water, and for clues of the current location.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss How to Control Fear and Panic When Lost**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Many cadets will have fears of various things. Take the opportunity in this TP to bring to light some of the cadets' fears.

(1) Open this TP by conveying to the cadets a personal fear (e.g. heights). This should open the door, encouraging the cadets to answer the following questions.

(2) Question the cadets on what some of their fears are (fears can be of any type) and record them on flipchart paper/chalk board/whiteboard.

(3) Categorize their fears in similar groups.

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To feel fear is normal and necessary. It is nature's way of giving a person an extra shot of energy or adrenaline. Fear is a very normal reaction for people faced with an emergency which threatens their life.



Providing the information below discuss how the effects of fear and panic may affect a person.

EFFECTS OF FEAR AND PANIC

How individuals react to fear depends more on one's state of mind than on the situation. In any stressful, unplanned, or threatening situation, fear may overpower rational thinking and can ruin the chances of survival. Fear may also improve chances of survival. Since something can usually be done to improve any situation, accepting fear as a natural reaction to a stressful situation could lead to constructive behaviour and could increase one's chance of survival.



Providing the information below discuss how the sense of hopelessness contributes to fear.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FEAR

The feeling of helplessness and the sense of hopelessness are factors that contribute to the sense of fear. Fear must be recognized, accepted, and if possible, used to one's advantage by channelling the adrenaline towards the tasks at hand. The effects of fear can be battled by identifying each factor, understanding and coping with it.



Providing the information below discuss each category of fear and ask the cadets what are some ways they may personally see themselves dealing with and overcoming each fear.

DEALING WITH FEAR

There are many common fears that arise when lost in the field. Addressing and understanding these fears may help one to survive for a prolonged period when lost. The list below explains how to deal with each fear.

Fear of the Unknown. What is out there? What is going to happen to me? Where is it safe? By accepting this fear as normal, one can remain calm and begin to answer each question. Do not criticize yourself for having critical or negative thoughts, just concentrate on and resolve each question or problem calmly and confidently.

Fear of Personal Weakness. This leads to a negative attitude and promotes behaviour to give up. Everyone can do something, no matter how bad the situation. Have confidence in the equipment that may be carried and one's skill to use it. Compare the current situation to similar situations learned about in the past to get through.

Fear of Discomfort. This causes people to continue into a bad storm in order to try to return to the security of a base camp where food and warmth are plenty, instead of stopping and making a safe, although uncomfortable, emergency shelter for the night before they are soaked, exhausted, hungry and hypothermic.

Fear of Being Alone. Even the independent can feel the effects of loneliness unless steps are taken to adapt to, and deal with the isolation. A strong imagination and sense of humour will help.

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Fear of the Dark or Animals. People with phobias can easily imagine their worst nightmares coming true, especially in the stressful survival situation. Again, approach each fear with an action plan and an understanding of this fear in context with the whole situation.

Fear of Suffering or Death. This may be the strongest ally in survival. Keep the thought that one must act to survive. By accepting this possibility, and not dwelling on it, one can determine if their plans will provide them with security in their current situation. Have confidence in the rescuers abilities to locate a person.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. How does fear affect a cadet when lost?

Q2. What factors contribute to fear?

Q3. How does the fear of discomfort affect cadets?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Fear can overpower rational thinking and could ruin the chances of survival. It may also improve them.

A2. Helplessness and the sense of hopelessness contribute to fear.

A3. This causes people to continue into a bad storm in order to try to return to the security of a base camp, instead of stopping and making a safe shelter to rest in.

Teaching point 3 **Identify the Five Elements of Survival**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



The instructor shall introduce this TP as the five elements of survival and relate the information to what the cadets will be trained on in further lessons (e.g. identify emergency shelters, lighting fires and cooking food).

FIVE ELEMENTS OF SURVIVAL

After successfully completing the S.T.O.P. action and recognizing a survival situation, the lost individual shall take inventory of all the food and equipment on hand and proceed to implement the five elements of survival. These are listed in order of priority.

1. **Attitude.** Maintaining a positive attitude is essential. One can survive by staying calm, using all available resources, and prioritizing personal needs.

2. **Shelter.** A shelter is designed to provide protection from the weather and, depending on the conditions, protect a person from either hot or cold temperatures. Hypothermia and hyperthermia are two of the greatest dangers in a survival situation. A proper shelter can help prevent these from occurring. In a desert scenario, for example, the goal is to stay under a shelter, shaded from the effects of the sun. In cold weather situations, the shelter will provide insulation.

3. **Water.** Water is the most essential nutrient for the human body. Even when thirst is not extreme it can dull your mind. Lack of water will slowly degrade the ability to survive. With adequate shelter and water you can survive for weeks.

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4. **Fire.** In a survival situation, fire provides heat and light, and signals to rescuers. Cold weather not only lowers the ability to think, but it also lowers one's will to do anything. Even a few degrees drop in body temperature can affect the ability to make reasonable decisions.

5. **Food.** Individuals in good physical condition can go for many days or even weeks without food. Your goal in a wilderness survival situation is to be located in the shortest time possible, so in most cases you will be located long before food becomes a survival issue. However it is always important to prepare for the worst and find ways to supply the body with substance, through berries, fish, animals, birds, etc.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS

Q1. What are the five elements of survival?

Q2. What is the one essential nutrient the body requires to function?

Q3. What does a shelter provide?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Attitude, shelter, water, fire and food.

A2. Water.

A3. Shelter provides protection from the weather and, depending on the conditions, protects you from either hot or cold temperatures.

Teaching point 4 **Develop a Plan**

Time: 20 min Method: In-Class Activity

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to have the cadets apply the actions to take when lost to a given scenario.

RESOURCES

- Pen and/or pencils (one per cadet);
- Flip chart marker (one per group); and
- Flip chart paper (one sheet per group).

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Groups shall be placed apart discouraging distraction between groups.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the cadets into groups of no more than four.
2. Give each group a marker and a piece of flipchart paper.

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3. Present a scenario or assign a different one to each group and allow the cadets 10 minutes to employ the S.T.O.P. acronym to a scenario provided.

4. Allow each group two minutes to present their plan to the other groups.

5. After the groups have finished presenting the instructor will provide feedback on the scenario. Feedback should summarize that attempting each path could cause a cadet to get more lost. Applying the S.T.O.P. actions will increase the chances that the cadet is found in a timely manner.

Lost Cadet (Scenario A)

Your cadet unit is participating in a weekend bivouac FTX where trekking a distance is involved. During the final leg of the trek, your shoelaces become undone and you stop to tie them as the group proceeds around a bend in the path. You are taking much longer than usual. Assuming the group continued on the same path, you take your time enjoying being by yourself on the path. As you round the corner the path opens into a small clearing that splits into four different routes. Concerned you will get into trouble by leaving the group you decide to try one of the routes and speed to catch up.

While travelling down the path you begin to realize this is probably not the correct route. The trek began during the late afternoon and you can see the sun is now getting low in the sky. You have travelled quickly on this path for a short period of time, when you realize you have taken the wrong path. You reassess your location and figure you must have made a mistake at the clearing. You head back on the path to the clearing hoping someone returned for you. Upon reaching the clearing no one is waiting for you. It is close to dark and there are three paths, one of which leads to the bivouac site.

You are lost, what should you do?

Lost Cadet (Scenario B)

Your cadet unit's Silver and Gold Star cadets have just finished an extensive three-day trek. The trek covered over 30 km and now everyone is resting at the rendezvous point for the arrival of the bus to transport all cadets back to the home unit. It is mid-afternoon and many cadets are relaxing, resting their sore, exhausted bodies. The cadet WO is tasked to maintain a watch on all cadets and set boundaries inside which the cadets must remain.

When the bus arrives many of the cadets are eager to load the equipment and board the bus in anticipation of going home. After the bus is loaded, the cadet WO makes a quick count confirming all cadets are on the bus.

When the cadets were told they could go and rest while awaiting the arrival of the bus, you decided to go for a quick nap. Proceeding to the edge of a clearing, you found some shrubs that you rested your pack against. Using it as a back rest, you quickly dozed off. As time passed you awoke from your nap and proceeded to the waiting area. Moving from the shrubs back to the clearing, you are shocked to find no one there.

The shock of being left alone is a scary thought. Your initial instinct was to walk out; however, you have no idea where you are and you are not familiar with the route the bus took. You were dropped off 30 km away and trekked here totalling three days travel.

What should you do?

Lost Cadet (Scenario C)

It is early September and your cadet unit has begun training for the orienteering competition that takes place in late October. You are new to orienteering, however after participating in a few orienteering events during summer training and a few previous practices with your cadet unit, you feel comfortable with your map-reading skills.

The orienteering coach recognizes your developing skill and decides to advance you to the intermediate training level for this practice. As you set out on the course, you realize that this will be more difficult than your previous

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orienteering practices. Travelling routes you have chosen, you find that the markers are placed in more difficult locations and the terrain the route crosses is more difficult to judge.

Enroute to your fourth control point you exit from a path and are faced with crossing a small river, the path looks to continue on the other side. The river appears to be rather deep. You decide to travel down the edge to find a shallow place to cross. After crossing you try to locate the path you saw to continue on course. You pace the side of the river for some time before finding the path you believed to be the correct route.

Continuing on course, you get the feeling you have travelled too far, however, you continue to move farther ahead. After a period of time you realize this is not the area you should be in at all—you must have taken the wrong path back by the river. The vegetation has changed and does not match what you see on the map. Stopping and inspecting the surrounding area you realize you have no idea where you are or where you have travelled. You are lost.

What should you do?

SAFETY

N/A.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in the activity in TP4 will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Having an understanding of the immediate actions to take when lost and implementing them will help cadets increase their survival chances.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

N/A.

REFERENCES

C2-004 (ISBN 1-896713-00-9) Tawrell, P. (1996). *Camping and Wilderness Survival: The Ultimate Outdoors Book*. Green Valley, ON: Paul Tawrell.

C2-016 (ISBN 0-517-88783-5) Curtis, R. (1998). *The Backpacker's Field Manual: A Comprehensive Guide to Mastering Backcountry Skills*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.

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CADENCE ARTICLE

Cadence • Issue 4 • Winter • 2001

Forum

New ideas, best practices and lessons learned



Sgt Stephanie Leger learned more than she bargained for on her survival instructor's course.

LOST AND FOUND

By Capt Jon MacDonald

Sgt Stephanie Leger learned a lot more than she expected on her six-week survival instructor's course at the air cadet summer training centre in Greenwood, NS, this past summer. So did the cadet movement.

The fourth-year air cadet from 101 Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron in Moncton, NB was lost for 23 hours on her solo exercise in Cloud Lake, NS. But her story had a happy ending. And lessons were learned.

On the day of her solo exercise, Cadet Leger had not returned to her campsite by the end of the day. After searching for a few hours, staff notified the authorities and later, her parents. It was a call that any parent would dread. The Leger's 16-year-old daughter had been missing for 14 hours.

Cadet Leger's mother, Bernice, immediately flew to Greenwood. The training centre had organized a van and driver, accommodations, and a padre. Mrs. Leger was briefed on the situation and, at her request, was brought to Cloud Lake where the search was in progress. She was impressed to see some 200 people involved with the search efforts including personnel from the training centre, the RCMP, 14 Wing Greenwood, the Emergency Measures Organization and ground search and rescue teams from across the province. There were helicopters from 14 Wing and the Department of Natural Resources, as well as several tracking dogs.

It was late afternoon when Cadet Leger was found in good spirits and physical condition. She told the searchers that she had strayed from her site and was unable to relocate it, partly because it was getting dark. When she realized she was lost, she stayed where she was until she was found. Following a happy and tearful reunion with her mother, waiting paramedics checked her medical status, verified later at the local hospital.

The incident resulted in some valuable lessons. Cadet Leger said afterwards that she had seen the helicopters; however, she felt they could not see her because she was dressed in combat clothing. Little consideration had been given to the fact that combat clothing is designed to keep someone hidden in the bush. Given that

SHE HAD SEEN THE HELICOPTERS; HOWEVER, SHE FELT THEY COULD NOT SEE HER BECAUSE SHE WAS DRESSED IN COMBAT CLOTHING.



Cadet Leger embraces her mother after her ordeal.

Macdonald, J., "Lost and Found", Cadence: The Leadership Magazine of the Canadian Cadet Movement, Issue 13, pp. 36-37

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combat clothing is practical for the course, Sgt Leger suggested that cadets carry something reflective or brightly coloured for potential emergency situations.

Searchers found Cadet Leger because she used the safety whistle she was given. However, whistles with a much greater range are available and are now being considered.

As well, the communication procedures and equipment at Cloud Lake were not adequate to handle the extensive search requirements. This is also being reviewed.

Some of the best lessons come from Sgt Leger herself. She has experienced what few people will, and we can learn from what she tells us. She says, "When you realize you are lost the first thing is to stop and sit, observe your surroundings and plan anything you will need such as shelter, fire, food and so on. This is exactly what I did. The hardest part of the ordeal was not to let fear conquer my mind, especially at night. A trick to staying calm at night is to sleep. You have to keep saying to yourself that someone will eventually find you, maybe not today or tomorrow but eventually."

"THE HARDEST PART OF THE ORDEAL WAS NOT TO LET FEAR CONQUER MY MIND, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHT."

She believes that when you're lost in the bush and alone with your mind, you have to use it to your advantage. "Your mind is a very powerful thing. If you think of all the horrible things that could happen, you'll get nothing accomplished. If you're hungry, convince yourself that you're not hungry! Make yourself laugh! Talk to rocks, trees…anything. I was lucky enough to have a 'pet' squirrel! I told him that he could be my buddy for now but in a few days, if I wasn't found, he'd be my lunch. While doing this, you almost forget you are lost. Even if it is for only a second, it really helps a lot."

The incident was also proof that our training works. Maj Ken Mayo, the chief training officer for Cloud Lake says, "Cadet Leger acted calmly and used her training towards staying safe for that night. She stayed calm throughout and kept to the general area where she was when she realized she was lost. The training that we give our cadets is effective and useful in real world situations."

Sgt Leger agrees. "The outcome could have been worse, but it wasn't — thanks to the training I received prior to this exercise. I'd highly recommend this course to any cadet."

Sgt Leger and her parents are thankful to those who helped in the search. They believe that "an exemplary team effort was the key to the happy ending." The cadet adds, "No-one knows how seeing them felt when they found me!"

Cadet Leger stayed to finish her course. Her parents agreed with her choice. Two days later, they sent her younger brother to the three-week physical education and recreation training course. As Mrs. Leger put it, "everyone got back on the horse."

– Capt MacDonald is the regional public affairs officer, Atlantic

"IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, CONVINCE YOURSELF THAT YOU'RE NOT HUNGRY! MAKE YOURSELF LAUGH! TALK TO ROCKS, TREES... ANYTHING."



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