

No. 9 (CITY OF WANGANUI) SQUADRON ATC REPORT ON WEEKEND EXERCISE

Unit File Reference: 9 4955/-/2

OPERATION " HEBE"

A weekend exercise for Basic Cadets of the Squadron was held over the period of 2-3 September 2006.

LOCATION

The exercise was conducted in the Tongou Valley, part of Orangimea Station in the Waitotara Valley.

PERSONNEL

There were a number of changes to the nominal roll up until Friday night. Flight Sergeant Jones and Sergeant M Mendez withdrew on Wednesday night due to work and family commitments. The Warrant Office was assigned to be the group leader of the Flight Sergeants group and with no other NCO's available, Cadet J Meade was offered the opportunity to lead a group, which he did very well. On Thursday night CDT (W) K Hackett withdrew due to sickness and on Friday night CDT (W) Clay due to her being required to play sport.

WO Hackett had to work Saturday morning and brought up Cadets Anderson E and J. They arrived around 1330.

An updated nominal roll including section and group details is attached.

TRANSPORT

Two mini vans and a trailer were supplied from Cadet Forces at Ohakea and were driven FLTLT Cleveland and myself. FGOFF Frericks drove a van loaned from WWCT Battalion Group. All vehicle were loaned on a "full out", "full back" basis.

EQUIPMENT

Tents, axes, shovels, ropes and other equipment were supplied from No.9's store.

MESSING

All rationing was sourced locally

MEDICAL

There were no major medical problems. CDT (W) Duxfield, said she was feeling weak as we were getting ready to depart to walk out. Another cadet in her group swapped packs so she was carrying a lighter one and Miss Smith walked her out ahead of her group.

TRAINING

Changes to the attached submitted training programme, that occurred included in the following;

Saturday 02-09-06

Majority at ATC just after 0800 with the first one arriving at 0745. Into the sections and gear checked, trailer packed and we departed, picking up CDT Matthews at Maxwell and we meet Miss Hawken at Waitotara.

Outside the woolshed at Orangimea Station the group food and equipment was distributed, FLTLT Cleveland conducted a briefing for walking in including timings and where we were going. Miss Smith and I headed in leaving marker poles along the way to ensure all made it to the camp site. The campsite had sustained a lot of damage from the recent weather, including a change in the creek bed. This is the first change to this camp site in the over 20 years we have been using it. A number of trees had been swept down the valley and at some stage a lot of water had gone through.



Returning to camp after the traps and snares

The time taken from briefing to arrival took a lot longer than planned as cadets had to alter clothing and some found the mud in places hard going. Finally all arrived at the camp site, where FLTLT Cleveland ran the briefing followed by the sections moving to their respective campsites. The NCO's gave the cadets an orientation of the area and the lectures were conducted in the section campsites, something we tried last year and worked very well, so this practice has been continued.

The sections then set up their respective camp sites, began to collect firewood and had lunch.

We moved back out down the valley and carried out a shortened ground to air signalling without having a flypast. While FGOFF Frericks conducted the afternoon exercise on traps and snares the rest of the staff started setting up the confidence course. Late in the afternoon the discussion on how to use the Squadron ration pack was carried out in the three sections.

After the evening meal the night exercise was held using Section 3's camp sites. Final debrief of the day with times advised for Sunday, then back to their respective sections for a drink, lights out, with the staff completing the final check of the cadets for the day once all were in bed.

Miss Smith giving a lesson to Section 3 on the use of their ration pack.



Sunday 11.09.05

All up by just after 0700 and breakfast under way, with some help by staff to assist in the lighting of fires.

A check of the traps and snares with the area being tidied up. A Spot and seek exercise was held under the direction of FGOFF Frericks while the NCO's assisted in the tightening of the ropes on the confidence course. All back to their campsites for a drink and a snack, followed by a leadership exercise run by Miss Smith and Miss Hawken, with WO Hackett conducting the 30 second hanging test.

The confidence course was completed in groups and was tackled with great deal of enthusiasm

Cadets returned to their sections and started to clean up, have lunch, staff inspection of the section camp sites. We were slowed down by a deluge of rain as the staff were checking the camp sites out and with raincoats on we took shelter while the shower passed. Following the debrief by the staff we departed in the groups for the road and back to Wanganui.



Section 1 completing a leadership exercise

Equipment returned to the store, tents pitched in one of the Army garages, vans cleaned and cadets then were able to go home.

GENERAL

An excellent exercise and we achieved several aims and objectives:

- Provided an opportunity for the Basic Cadets to put into practice what they had learnt in the classroom.
- Experience medium distance walking with a group and firelighting
- The NCO's worked reasonably well with their respective groups and sections
- The lecturettes and the ration pack lesson conducted in the sections worked well and this practise will be continued in the future.
- Due to the changes in the area we did not run the night exercise as two separate groups, as we did last year. However consideration will be given to trying it again in future years as it worked very well on the 2005 Basic bushcraft exercise.



Sergeant Hatcher's group trying to put Cadet Joblin-Mills through the Spiders Web.

The basic skills of bushcraft were taught well on this exercise, with a wide range of cadet's prior knowledge being seen. The majority of cadets

while at primary school have been on a camp, but the knowledge gained for being in the bush is low. The knowledge and skills gained by these cadets will be built on in future exercises.

The staff identified a number of areas for improvement in the NCO's bushcraft knowledge and bush leadership which we can build upon at unit level and next time on a squadron exercise. Some of these have been already covered, however a refresher for some is timely.

The cadets experienced a range of weather over the weekend which may assisted them in making decisions on their clothing on future exercises. This along with any knowledge gains and the experience of the bush will be built upon in as they progress through the Squadron.

A further report and photos will be placed on the Squadron website: www.9squadron.org.nz

SQNLDR C H Quirk, NZCF
Unit Commander

4 September 2006



Above: Cadet Higgle completing the crawl through.



Left: Some of the cadets at the final brief before we all walk out.