

5. Control, This is XR1



Introduction

During searches information always needs to be passed to Control, where Search Managers are based. Radios are our main way to communicate in the field but there's a technique and they don't always work...

Activities

Ages 10 ½ - 14 ½ years (e.g. Scouts and Guides)

- Show how to get the best reception and transmission.
- Understand the regulations governing the use of amateur radio equipment.
- Either:
 - Take part in games and activities where information must be passed between teams via radios or walkie-talkies. Or,
 - Use KSAR's protocols to pass information to Control via radios or walkie-talkies throughout any other Challenge, such as updates on your progress, activities and findings during a night hike, first aid or crime scene management.

Ages 14 ½ years + (e.g. Senior Section, Explorers and Network)

- Demonstrate how to tune simple communications devices such as radios or mobile phones.
- Show how to get the best reception and transmission.
- Understand the regulations governing the use of amateur radio equipment.
- Either:
 - Take part in games and activities where information must be passed between teams via radios or walkie-talkies. Or,
 - Use KSAR's protocols to pass information to Control via radios or walkie-talkies throughout any other Challenge, such as updates on your progress, activities and findings during a night hike, first aid or crime scene management.
- We can't get radio coverage, what now?



From Hill to High Water™



Equipment

Radio cards - see separate resource. Walkie-talkies can replace more expensive radios in localised activities. Equipment to carry out your chosen game or activity.

Setup

You can practice this challenge in any way that suits your group and surroundings; part of an incident hike, by playing games which rely on communication, etc. Here are a couple of suggestions to get your imagination started.

Games and activities to practice radio skills

- Scout Base and the Guide website list many activities involving communication. Any activity where someone is 'blind' or cannot speak or needs to receive constant updates can be adapted to involve radios. The general aim is for individuals to learn to speak clearly and concisely, to wait their turn and to use good voice control.
- They Were Wearing What? See below for an example of a simple scenario based activity.

Further information

This can be a huge topic and the information contained in the complete Radio User Manual (see separate resource) is large. However, the manual is easy to scroll through to find the information you want. Listed below are some of the most relevant pages to break the information down; plus a few extra notes.

Introduction

- Page 2

Regulations governing the use of amateur radio equipment

- Page 4
- Page 7

How radios work and how to get the best from them

- Pages 8-9: how to use a radio
- Pages 9-10: looking after radios
- Page 12: getting the best reception

How to speak and what to say

- Pages 14-28: examples of simple conversations, code words and abbreviations.
- Radio Cards, to be printed and used as prompts are found in a third document. They ensure relevant and comprehensive information is passed clearly and concisely. For example, if you want to send information about a casualty's condition and treatment you would use the CasRep prompt card. This way information is always given in the same order and nothing is missed. Also, the person receiving the message has the same prompt card so knows the order to expect information in, making recording easier.

When radio coverage isn't available

- Teams, or maybe just the radio operator and a buddy may need to move to higher ground.
- Mobile phones are a useful backup.
- Sometimes a pair of 'runners' may be sent.
- Flares can help alert fellow rescuers to your location when a casualty has been found.
- It's vital every search team is allocated a search area by Control. This way there is a record of where everyone is in case of incidents or simply communication issues.
- Teams should check in regularly with an update on their progress and location; see the SitRep prompt card.

They Were Wearing What? (An example of a simple scenario-based radio activity)

Setting the scene

The background to this search is that a young child has been reported missing and Search & Rescue has been called out to assist the Police.

Search areas have been assigned and one of teams (4 or 5 members) searching a local wood has encountered a person who they need to obtain any information they can from. The description of the child and the clothes worn are being collated at present and will be sent out to the team as soon as possible but this will not delay the start of the search.

As groups are searching they will meet a stranger (an 'outside influence') who they need to have a conversation with to find out if they have any relevant information. This could be done indoors or outdoors. Why not ask someone from outside your group to take on the informant's part so it feels a bit more real.

In **black** text below is the information that the 'outside influence' (the person the team have met) can give freely but the information in **red** can only be given out if the right questions are asked – make the groups work for it!

Brief for the outside influence

REMEMBER THE COLOUR CODING.

Share: You've been on a daily walk with your dog along a public footpath through the woods.

Tell if asked: You do it every day at this time starting at 1200 hrs and finish usually around 1330 hrs. You do the same walk starting here and finishing at the same point each time. Your car was the only car in the car park when you started.

Share: You saw several walkers on your route, but no young child on their own.

Tell if asked: You passed a man and a woman half way round.
You passed a woman and two children (both boys).
You passed a man and a dog.
You passed a man and a young girl.

Descriptions

Girl: approximately 5-6 yrs old (you have grand children of that age and size), wearing a blue waterproof jacket, blue trousers and pink Wellington boots. Her hair you think was fair but she had her hood up. She has a fair complexion.

Male: approximately 6ft tall (same height as you as you passed), possibly about 30yrs old. Dark complexion could be foreign, black shoulder length hair. Dark coloured jacket and trousers (you didn't really notice as your attention was on the girl stroking your dog). He pulled the girl away and headed away back down path you had just come along.

Purpose

- To decide if the child the outside influence saw was the missing child.
- To decide if the man was abducting the girl or if he was the girl's father just in a hurry to get home.

Answer

We can't know so what would the search team do? They should radio all the information through to control with details of the encountered person who would then pass the information into the police to be followed up.

Compare how each team handles the questioning; do they think outside the box and ask searching questions to understand more about the situation? How well do they pass on the information to control using the relevant radio cards?

This activity can be done using radios if you have them, walkie talkies, mobile phones (although this might only work with contract, rather than pay-as-you-go phones) or simply by communicating from either side of a curtain or other barrier. Ensure radio procedures are followed including signing into and out of conversations, composing clear and logical messages, and speaking clearly.