

Final Hill Days - Candidate Guidance

Introduction

The final hill day assessment is a key milestone in the life of a team members, it represents the stage where they move from probationary team member to full team member status.

This is a potential a very stressful day and candidates will be challenged. Examining team members should remember this and aim to provide a testing day in a positive environment.

Overview of the Day

The format of the day is aimed to test the Search and Rescue knowledge of a candidate and the application of knowledge in an environment where the prospective full team member may reasonable be expected to operate.

This is achieved by running skill stations to cover a broad range of knowledge and skills, and by examining the candidate during an SAR exercise scenario. A probationary team member who has completed their training logbook should have few problems in successfully passing the final hill day.

Application for Final Hill Days

Probationary team members should apply in writing to the Committee to under go a final hill day. The candidates need to submit a completed log book and provide evidence of attending rescues and practices.

Composition of the Final Hill Day Assessment Panel

The final hill day panel should ideally be composed of 3 to 4 full team members including the Training Officer. The full team members should have good SAR skills knowledge and judgement and personal knowledge the candidate(s).

Format of the Final Hill Day

Skills stations provide an opportunity to test the range and depth of a candidate's knowledge and skills. The candidate is expected to be able to answer questions and perform tasks from a list that is held by the training officer. Skill stations for the following areas will be run:

- Base Operations**
- Search skills**
- Local Area Knowledge**
- Helicopter Operations**
- Stretchers**
- Rescue systems**
- Operations**

Search and Rescue Training Log Book

A typical skill that a candidate will be asked to demonstrate would be:

Rig the stretcher and prepare it to be winched.

Practical Exercise

A practical exercise allows the assessment panel to view how a candidate performs in a typical search and rescue incident. The candidate is expected to demonstrate the range of skills and judgement that an active full team member would be expected to have.

If areas for improvements are identified then a plan should be provided to the candidate at the end of the day.

Typical Final Hill Day Time Table

0940	Assessment panel meets and finalise the plan and tasks for the day
1000	Candidate(s) introduced to panel and plan for the final hillday
1015	Start skills stations
O/c	Lunch
1300	Pack and depart for exercise
1600	Return to Oggi Base
1610	Final Hill Day Assessment Panel review of candidate
1630	Debrief candidate

Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria should be used to score candidates:

Criteria	Score
A high level of competency/knowledge was demonstrated, they appreciated the strengths and weakness of the system and could implement it in a SAR environment with a high level of confidence. They demonstrated a high level of safety awareness and inspired confidence.	3
A good level of competency/knowledge was demonstrated, the candidate was reasonably happy in performing the activity but there are small areas/parts that need polishing before they are completely confident. They were able to demonstrate a good understanding of safety issues.	2
The candidate was able to demonstrate the skill but with a low competency. They were not confident and showed a poor understanding of the context of its applicability. They raised some concerns about safety but with further work they could be remedied.	1
The candidate struggled to demonstrate the skill to any level of competency; there was a significant cause for concern about the candidate's ability to perform it safely. The candidate demonstrated little confidence in being able to complete the skill.	0
They lacked the knowledge to operate effectively as a full team member.	

Search and Rescue Training Log Book

During an assessment the following terms are used with the following meanings:

<i>Demonstrate an awareness</i>	The candidate is expected to be able to discuss the principles, concepts, advantages and limitations
<i>Demonstrate</i>	The candidate is expected to complete a task

Outcome of the Final Hill Day

The assessment panel will mark candidates and will provide a report to the candidate on their performance. The panel will make a recommendation to Committee from one of the following options:

<i>Pass</i>	The assessment panel has the confidence that the candidate has the skills required to operate as an effective member of the rescue team. Candidates will be expected to continue to train and build experience.
<i>Provisional</i>	A provisional pass will be awarded when the assessment panel feel that there are a few areas of knowledge or practice that required further work and it is within the candidate's ability to achieve the required improvements within a 1-4 months. The candidate will be re-assessed on these areas at an agreed date, typically within 6 months of their final hill day.
<i>Fail</i>	A fail will be awarded to a candidate when they fail to demonstrate the skills and knowledge that would be expected of a team member. The candidate can appeal to committee for a re-assessment if the appeal is lodged within 1 month of the final hill day.