

## EXERCISE PRIMAL JOURNEY

### NARRATIVE

1. An AGC expedition is shortly to deploy to Resolute Bay nearly 250 kilometres (km) above the Lomonosov ridge where it will make the 720kms journey along the 75W longitudinal line to the geographic North Pole. Starting from the edge of the Arctic, the selected team of 6 will look to reach the pole trekking 15kms a day for 48days, hauling sledges weighing 120kg in temperatures of around -45°C. You were short-listed for the expedition party but did not make the final cut. You were, however, selected as a member of support staff and have just arrived to join the Project Group who have been working out of Base Camp at Ward Hunt Island for the past 10days. Amongst the support team is Dr Bernie Boggle (Medical Officer), Major Horace Huntley (OIC Support Staff) and Ronnie Rooster, a retired Army Officer turned botanist who has used his old boy network to tag on to the expedition support team so he can collect vital plant samples for future research into the little known “Flora-Jurassic’s” of the Arctic region.

2. At Base Camp on Ward Hunt Island, Horace welcomes you to the team and gives you a background brief on the events of the last 10days and the future expectations for the expedition team. You are told that there are 4 camps on Ward Hunt Island, 1 of which is the well-equipped Base Camp. You are also told that the final cut for places on the AGC expedition is still to be made. Whilst several of the Project Group expedition hopefuls have since returned to Base Camp following the conduct of last minute preparation out of the 3 different training camps on the island, Smithy, Blackie and Bob are yet to have returned. Horace is adamant that all prospective expedition members and support staff now need to return to Base Camp.

3. Each camp has a radio with a 12km range but Horace has been experiencing difficulty trying to contact not only the 3 individuals but also Ronnie. He knows that they are located at Camps 2 and 3 and wishes you to go to locate the individuals and bring them back to Base Camp within the next 2 days. Horace seems particularly frustrated by the fact that Ronnie is yet to have returned to Base Camp. Horace continues by saying that despite having schooled with Ronnie at Harton College, gained Camford Blues together for polo and duck-hunting and served 13 years in the Greens and Queens together, Ronnie’s luvvie fixation with botany and the “Flora-Jurassic’s” is proving to be a thorn in the side of the Polar expedition preparation. However, Horace reinforces that whilst the expedition is the main effort, Ronnie’s “Flora-Jurassic’s” research is still to be supported.

4. Horace continues on “permanent send” and you note down the following information:

a. If you get into serious difficulty, the only place you can casevac an individual from Ward Hunt Island is by boat from the jetty, although the boat only picks up from the jetting at 1530 hrs each day.

b. At Base Camp there are 8 Project Group members including Dr Bernie Boggle and a recovery sledge.

c. Travelling anywhere outside after last light is a severe risk and is strongly discouraged as there are many ice faults and crevasses.

d. There are a number of powerful lights at Base Camp if individuals have to travel at night.

5. Horace passes you a sketch map (attached – not to scale) of Ward Hunt Island with the locations of each camp to orientate yourself to the ground. Just as you are expecting to be trekking out and back to Camps 2 and 3, a helicopter arrives with extra supplies required for the expedition. You chance your luck and ask the RCAF pilot for a lift. To your surprise he agrees but is only able to drop you off at Camp 3 as he has several other taskings on the mainland after which the helicopter will be grounded for 3 days and undergo essential maintenance, service and repair.

6. On arrival at Camp 3 you find Blackie, Bob and Ronnie. It is nearing last light and you decide to embark on the overland return journey to Base Camp at first light the following morning. Ronnie expresses concern regarding 4 plant specimens, previously unknown which he believes to be of significant bio-botanical importance. He says that they will be okay in the pint size temporary vacuo-thermo jars for the duration of the journey but it is crucial they get to Base Camp within 30 hours of departure from Camp 3. You reassure him that if you leave by 0800 hrs you should make it back to Base Camp well before dark.

7. You decide that bivouac tents, sleeping bags and rations for 24 hours should be taken in case you run into bad weather. You put your own tent, sleeping bag, rations and thermo jars into your rucksack but the others go onto Bob's sledge. Each man has a water bottle and you have a first aid kit in your pack. At 0750 hrs you receive a panicky radio message from Smithy who is at Camp 2. Smithy, a diabetic, had been at Camp 3 yesterday before his return to Camp 2 but had left his insulin supply behind. He is evidently worried and informs you that he needs to administer insulin within 8 hours otherwise he will slip into unconsciousness and subsequently a coma. Ronnie finds the insulin supply which seems extensive, you stow it in your rucksack and head off to Camp 2 at first light. You and Ronnie are pulling a small sledge and Blackie and Bob follow behind pulling the other. For safety reasons you inform Ronnie that the harness must be undone when crossing a snow bridge or crevasse and that each man should cross separately to avoid being pulled down if a sledge should slip into a crevasse.

8. You have travelled about 2km and it is minutes before 0900 hrs and you are now onto Good glacier. You and Ronnie have just crossed a snow bridge over a crevasse when you just turn in time to see Bob disappear into the crevasse. Blackie is not to be seen and you and Ronnie immediately set about rescuing the other two. With ropes and crampons you climb down into the crevasse and first come to Bob, lying on a ledge 40 feet down. He seems to be relatively unscathed but complains that his leg hurts. You continue the descent and find Blackie about 120 feet down, clearly badly injured. You attempt to find a pulse but quickly realise that you are too late and the fall was fatal. You attempt to carry his body to the top but cannot and you see the sledge wedged tightly in the narrowing crevasse some 50 feet below. It is broken and there is no sign of the pack. You leave Blackie and go back up to Bob, suffering a probable broken leg and possible broken ribs. You and Ronnie manage to get him out and onto the surface. Bob cannot walk and his arctic jacket is badly torn. This whole episode takes some considerable time and when you look at your watch, the time is 1225 hrs. You then realise you have left the radio at Camp 3. You establish your location, mark your spot on the map and start to think.....

## **General Information**

### First/Last Light

- First Light – 0800 hrs
- Last Light – 1800 hrs

### Speeds/Distances

- Best speed X-country on foot – 2.5 kph
- Best speed by 2 men pulling a sledge – 2 kph
- Best speed by 1 man pulling a sledge – 1 kph
- Good and Meld Glacier both have a 1 km crossing
- Meld Glacier has much broken ice – the max speed across it is 1 kph

## **YOUR TASK**

**Consider the problem. What are you going to do?**

**Write down your thought process that leads you to a plan. Consider the following:**

**Aims**

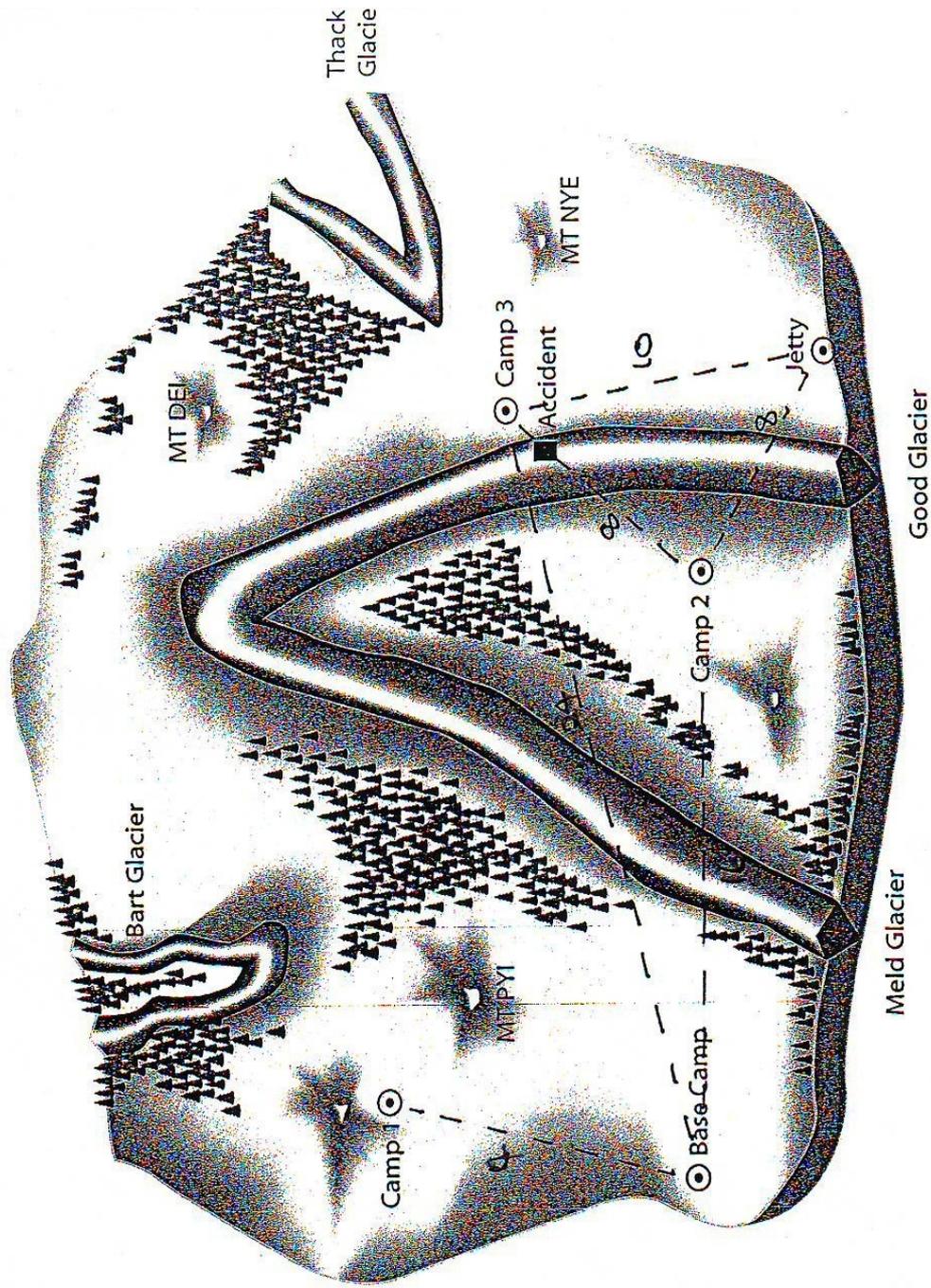
**The options open to you – consider each possibility and draw conclusions**

**Decide on the best option – give reasons**

**Outline your plan with timings**

**Reasonable assumptions are acceptable provide you state them but in general only use the information provided.**

**Be prepared to present your plan verbally and to be able to justify it. You will be able to refer to the map and your notes.**



## WARD HUNT ISLAND

Base Camp - Camp 1	=	11 km
Base Camp - Camp 2	=	16 km
Base Camp - Camp 3	=	24 km
Base Camp - Accident	=	22 km
Camp 2 - Jetty	=	8 km
Camp 2 - Accident	=	6 km
Accident - Jetty	=	9 km
Camp 3 - Jetty	=	10 km
Base Camp - Jetty	=	25 km
Camp 2 - Camp 3	=	8 km
Meld Glaciers	=	1 km crossing
Good Glaciers	=	1 km crossing

## Exercise Primal Journey

### DS Notes

#### AIMS:

1. Insulin to Smithy by 1550 hrs D Day before he falls into a diabetic coma
2. Evacuate Bob to receive timely medical assistance
3. Plants to Base Camp by 1400 hrs D+1
4. Recover Blackie's body
5. Establish Contact with Base Camp
6. Ensure safety of all members of the team

#### FACTORS:

1. Personnel:
  - a. All involved (excl yourself) directly have limited use
  - b. Smithy is a diabetic, urgently needs insulin before slipping into unconsciousness - if he receives insulin in time he will be of use
  - c. Ronnie is retired and arguably could be employed to great effect.
  - d. Blackie is dead but needs recovering
  - e. Bob is in a dilapidating medical state (immobile, broken ribs, leg)
  - f. At the time of the accident, you and Ronnie are the only 'fully capable' members out on the ground (*depending on your assessment of Ronnie's ability*)
  - g. Dr Bernie Boggle is back at Base Camp with 7 Project Group members and Horace
2. Timings:
  - a. 0750 hrs D Day – Call from Smithy needing insulin delivered to Camp 2
  - b. 0800 hrs – First light, 1800 hrs – Last light
  - c. 0900 hrs – or minutes before, time of accident
  - d. Time now – 1225 hrs
  - e. 1550 hrs – Time when Smithy needs to have received his insulin
  - f. 1400 hrs D+1 – Ronnie's plant specimens need to be back at Base Camp
  - g. 1530 hrs daily – Boat departs jetty
3. Distances: (as per map)

- a. Base Camp (BC) to Camp 1 – 11 km
- b. BC to Camp 2 – 16 km
- c. BC to Camp 3 – 24 km
- d. BC to accident – 22 km
- e. BC to Jetty – 25 km
- f. Camp 2 to Accident – 6 km
- g. Camp 3 to Accident – 2 km
- h. Camp 2 to jetty – 8 km
- i. Accident to jetty – 9 km
- j. Camp 3 to jetty – 10 km
- k. Meld & Good Glacier – 1km crossing

4. Speeds:

- a. Best speed Cross-country on foot – 2.5 kph
- b. Best speed by 2 men pulling a sledge – 2 kph
- c. Best speed by 1 man pulling a sledge – 1 kph
- d. Best speed across Meld Glacier – 1kph

5. Climate/Ground:

- a. Climate is against you and will exacerbate every other problem – snow, ice and cold (up to -45 degrees C)
- b. Difficult terrain, particularly Meld Glacier – 1 kph crossing
- c. Travel at night difficult due to ice faults and crevasses

6. Equipment:

- a. Radios only at BC, Camps 1, 2 & 3
- b. Radio range only 12 km
- c. Lamps needed for any night travel – all lamps are at Base Camp and are required for any night travel undertaken
- d. Base Camp is “*well-equipped...*” – DS discretion as to how they read this
- e. Following accident, you only have a 24hr ration pack, 1 tent, 1 sledge
- f. No helicopter recovery available for 3 days

- g. Only CASEVAC option is a boat which arrives at jetty at 1530 hrs daily
  - h. Recovery sledge at Base camp
  - i. You have a small first aid kit in your pack
  - j. Each man has a water bottle.
7. Transport:
- a. Your sledge - 1 or 2 kph depending on the number of people pulling it. *(It is suggested that DS discourage those looking to get more people pulling the sledge so as to increase the speed – **only space for 2 people to pull the sledge**).*
  - b. Recovery sledge at BC
  - c. Blackie and Bob's sledge – wedged deep in the crevasse
  - d. Helicopter in 3 days time – currently being serviced/fixed (*not an option*) and available on D+2
  - e. Boat from jetty available daily at 1530 hrs

POSSIBLE SOLUTION:

1. Time now is 1225 hrs. You mark the spot where Blackie is lying for later recovery by helicopter - when fixed. (It is ice cold and the body will be preserved). You and Ronnie administer first aid with the kit available, stabilise and pull Bob the 6km distance to Camp 2 with the intention of providing insulin for Smithy. At 2kph (speed of 2 men pulling a sledge) you will arrive at Camp 2 at 1525 hrs which is in time for Smithy (25 mins before the 8 hr cut off). Ronnie stays at Camp 2 to look after Bob overnight whilst you and Smithy (with backpack, rats and specimens) embark on the 16 km trip towards Base Camp (making the assumption that Smithy will be fully recovered following receipt of his insulin). You both travel for 2 hours covering 5 km and are now 11 km from Base Camp. You have the radio with you from Camp 2 and radio in to BC informing them of the situation and request the doctor + 1 head to Camp 2 now with lights to travel at night.

It is now 1725 hrs and you and Smithy make camp just before last light. If the doctor manages to leave by 1800 hrs, he could check in on you and Smithy at 2300 hrs (10 km at 2.5 kph + 1km at 1 kph (Meld) = 5 hrs) to confirm you are ok, leave a person with Smithy and proceed to Camp 2 with you arriving at D+1 0100 hrs. You and the doctor could then check the condition of Bob and Ronnie and settle down until first light.

At 0800 hrs, Smithy + 1 set off on the 11 km journey to Base Camp arriving at 1300 hrs (plant specimens arrive with 60 mins to spare). Also at first light you depart for the jetty with Ronnie, the doctor and Bob on a sledge stabilised. You travel the 8km journey at a speed of 2kph, arriving at the jetty at 1200 hrs, 3 hrs 30 mins before boat departs and then safely casevac Bob from the island.

Upon completed service and fixing of the helicopter (D+2), you travel with the crew and rescue team to retrieve Blackie's body from the crevasse.