

O-0420
PERFORM AN AIRFIELD SEARCH (RAMP CHECK)

CONDITIONS

You are leading a ground team that has been tasked to search an airfield and have just arrived at the airfield.

OBJECTIVES

Take all steps necessary to determine if the missing aircraft is at this airport.

TRAINING AND EVALUATION

Training Outline

1. During a missing aircraft search, one of the first priorities of the mission is to investigate airfields in the surrounding area. This investigation is to determine if the missing aircraft may have landed, refueled, or stopped over to avoid weather. Missing planes can be found at the wrong airport for many reasons. The pilot might have landed successfully and gone about his business, not realizing that people are looking for him. Sometimes, aircraft crash near an airport they were trying to land at, or just took off from.

2. Your team may be tasked to search one or more airfields, or you may come across an airfield during a search. In either case, you should follow the following steps:

a. **Contact the Owner.** The first priority is to contact the airfield owner/operator or fixed base operator (FBO). This individual will permit you access to controlled airfields and will also be helpful in obtaining any records. If no FBO is present, you may proceed to search the airfield within the limits of safety and trespassing laws.

b. **Brief your people.** Make sure all your team members know what the missing aircraft looks like, and what it's tail number is. Remind them of possible search clues, including

1) The missing plane itself.

2) Any plane that comes close to the description (it's possible your briefing at mission base contained an error)

3) Any clues that a plane might have crashed near the airport, such as bad weather in the vicinity at the time the plane was lost, trees knocked down, people reporting hearing/seeing something strange, etc. See Task O-0408 - Identify Aircraft Search Clues for more details.

c. **Conduct the search.** Have your team conduct the following search actions (you may divide your team up as you see fit, making sure that inexperienced members are teamed with more experienced members):

1) **Check records.** Check any landing/take-off records at the airport for information on the missing aircraft. Also check any fuel purchase logs. Look for the tail number of the plane you are looking for.

2) **Conduct Interviews.** Interview people at the airport (See Task O-1101 - Conduct Witness Interview). Airport workers, maintenance personnel, or perhaps somebody just 'hanging around' may have seen the missing aircraft or know someone who might have seen it. All of these types of leads must be thoroughly

investigated. Continue to conduct interviews over time - people come and go at airfields all the time, and the person who saw the search target might not be there when you arrive.

3) **Check the flight line.** Have personnel walk down the flight line / tarmac and check the registration numbers on all aircraft parked on the airfield. Look into hangars and check numbers. Each of these should be conducted within regulations and local laws. If on a controlled airport, notify ground control and/or operations before entering operational areas like the ramps and hangars. Use good judgment in deciding to enter hangars or aircraft; you are not normally going to find a person in distress within a hangar or parked airplane, so waiting for law enforcement personnel, the aircraft owner, or the FBO to open it is totally reasonable.

e. **Leave a phone number.** If the search results are negative, leave the mission base phone number and a contact name (normally the incident commander) with the FBO. Request that he continue asking about the missing aircraft to people who come into the airport. Any information that he develops can then be forwarded directly to mission base. **Note: Do not leave the airfield until you receive permission from mission base.**

Additional Information

More detailed information on this topic is available in Chapters 7, 18, and 19 of the Ground Team Member and Leader Reference Text.

Evaluation Preparation

Setup: Prepare a diagram of an airfield (or conduct the test at an actual airfield). Prepare a description of a missing aircraft and its pilot as well as the incident commander's name and phone number. The team leader may use any equipment in his field gear (including this guide).

Brief Team Leader: Verbally brief the team leader on the missing aircraft. Tell him that he has a ground team consisting of himself, one other senior (GTM qualified) and 5 cadets (3 GTM, 2 Trainee). Tell the team leader to describe, in sequence how he will search the airport. Tell him that you will play the role of the FBO. After he has described the search, tell him he did not find the plane, and ask him what he would do now.

Evaluation

<u>Performance measures</u>	<u>Results</u>	
The team leader:		
1. Contacts the FBO and identifies himself and mission	P	F
2. Briefs his team on the missing aircraft and personnel, and what to look for.	P	F
3. Describes how he would use his team to:		
a. Check for landing/takeoff/refueling logs.	P	F
b. Conduct interviews of people at the airport.	P	F
c. Search the flight line and hangers	P	F
4. Does not leave inexperienced team members to operate without supervision.	P	F
5. Requests and receives permission to depart from mission base.	P	F
6. Leaves mission base information with the FBO before departing	P	F

Student must receive a pass on all performance measures to qualify in this task. If the individual fails any measure, show what was done wrong and how to do it correctly.