

TEXAS A&M TASK FORCE STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

RESPONSE ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL PACK TEST/WALK

VOLUME 1

REFERENCE NO. 1-09

1.00 PURPOSE

- 1.01 The purpose of this standard is to provide information regarding the environment in which members of Texas Task Force respond in as well as to describe the physical training walk required of the Task Force Members yearly.

2.00 OBJECTIVE

- 2.01 Because of the physical demands required of Task Force members during a deployment, it is important for the safety of the member and the team that all personnel are physically able and capable to perform the required duties. In order to do this, members must complete the Physical Training Walk annually in the required allotted time.

3.00 DEFINITIONS

- 3.01 **Physical Training:** PT walk required for Task Force members to remain deployable.
- 3.02 **Response Environment:** The environment, which is constantly changing, in which the Task Force will respond to in the case of deployment.
- 3.03 **Training Walk:** The required PT walk measures the physical fitness levels of Task Force Members.

4.00 GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 4.01 Texas Task Force (TX-TF1, TX-TF2 & TX-TF3) personnel train and operate in a wide range of environments, presenting various potential health and occupational hazards.
- 4.02 All candidates should carefully consider the potential hazards and conditions that they may encounter while working with TX-TF.

4.03

The list below contains many of the suggested hazard-based capabilities of TX-TF personnel. Operational hazard profiles may change in the future as TX-TF expands its mission and capabilities.

- The ability to operate in and around conditions of temperature extremes and inclement weather for sustained periods in hygienic austerity without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to navigate and operate on uneven, unstable, and hazardous surfaces without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to operate hazardous machinery safely, to wear/carry heavy objects, and to walk long distances while wearing operational gear without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to sustain exertional function in infrastructurally austere environments (no electricity, cellular phone capability, power, climate control, potable and non-potable water, and food) without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to sustain exertional function without assistance in environments of high dust, particulate matter, and unpredictable allergen assault without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to operate in environments of hazardous debris, including but not limited to sharp objects, chemicals, biohazardous waste, and radiation, without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to sustain exertional function in extremes of elevation (altitude) without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to sustain exertional function in extremes of space (confined, elevated, airplane, open), in high noise, and low illumination conditions, without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to sustain exertional function in extremes of vector and zoonotic (animal, insect, parasites, fungi, bacteria) threat, and the ability to work in coordination with non-human team members (canines), without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to be exposed to traumatic and non-traumatic illnesses of humans and animals, exposure to bodily fluids without undue hazard or assistance required.
- The ability to function in conditions of rapidly changing, high operational stress with interrupted rest/eating cycles and conditions without undue hazard or assistance required.

4.04

The Task Force Medical Director has been charged with the responsibility of ensuring the health and welfare of the Task Force membership is sufficient to operate within those conditions and environments based on his/her knowledge of the risk parameters of the multi-hazard urban search and rescue environment.

4.05

The FEMA US&R National Response System requires all deployable members to have a baseline medical exam and Physician's Clearance prior to deployment.

- 4.06 The FEMA US&R National Response System requires a pre-deployment medical check-in to ensure that the responders are physically healthy.
- 4.07 Due to the physical exertion potential during search and rescue operations the Task Force has developed a simple activity that reoccurs on almost all deployments; walking while wearing a uniform and carrying an assigned web gear pack system with recommended load. The activity is a measure of aerobic activity, muscular strength and muscular endurance.
- 4.08 The PT Walk will be conducted on a designated course of 2 miles and will be monitored and supervised for safety and any necessary medical support. Medical support will be arranged so that the Task Force medical components may participate with their team members.
- 4.09 Participants will maintain their normal uniform and PPE for the PT walk. The ensemble includes BDU pants, BDU blouse and/or long-sleeved T-shirt, helmet and Nimrod web gear system loaded with 30 pounds. Members may wear any closed-toed footwear.
- 4.010 Members are required to complete the walk within 40 minutes.
- 4.011 Members may attempt the walk as many times necessary or required in order to complete it in the allotted time.
- 4.012 Members will have the opportunity to complete the walk at the Mobilization Exercises in College Station and Hensley, or upon arrangement with full-time staff members.
- 4.013 Individual information will be documented to assist in clinical care both during and after the exercise and to better advise the trending of overall task force health.
- 4.014 If there are any untoward events the situation shall be documented by TEEX staff, the Task Force Leader and clinical evaluation shall be documented by the Task Force Medical Team Manager and submitted to the TX-TF Medical Director who will brief the sponsoring agency for recommended mitigation and course of action. Clinical care shall not be delayed, but notification of the TX-TF Medical Director shall occur as soon as clinical care is rendered to assure proper HIPAA protected follow up.