

Instructions of the Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge

Overview

The Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge is essentially a long distance recon patrol challenge, the duration of which is at least 48h.

It comprises the following main activities:

- Covert movement on terrain, during day and night, according to a pre-determined schedule and coordinates.
- Evading "enemy" forces, acquiring information about them and transmitting the information to base.

There may be some of the following additional activities:

- Locating and freeing/liberating of hostages.
- Locating of "missing" groups.
- Teamwork challenges.
- Knowledge of the international Rules of Engagement.
- Knowledge of military history of the world.

The Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge is organized by the Estonian Defence League (EDL) in cooperation with the Estonian military, government, civil organizations and businesses.

The official language of the Challenge is English.

Goals

To determine the best teams who can perform the set tasks under enormous physical strain.

To strengthen and diversify international military cooperation.

To enable the testing of new military equipment and skills.

Concept

There are four members in each team. On the course, each team must include a minimum of 3 members. The entire area of the Challenge is considered "hostile territory", except checkpoints and an area with a radius of 1 km surrounding each checkpoint. The teams must conform to their movement tactics, maintain camouflage and utilize hidden passages to evade the "enemy". During the mandate and the following meeting, the teams will be given all of the necessary operational information compiled by S2 and S3. The teams will traverse the course on foot; using terrain features to stay hidden from the "enemy". The course must be traversed as a solitary reconnaissance-rescue group and cooperation between teams is forbidden. Also, the teams are not allowed to make contact with other teams or support crew (except in pre-determined map locations, with a referee present). Each team has 4 participants. Only 1 participant per team may abort. If a team has 3 members left and another member (members) needs to abort, the entire team must abort. The team of the aborted participant must leave all of the aborted participant's gear

except food and ammo. The team can only use the food supplies available on the course. It is forbidden to aid a team with additional food and water (except if the rules of the specific Challenge state otherwise). The decision will be made by the ruling referee of the Challenge.

General procedures

Accommodation – the organizer accommodates all foreign participants in a tent camp.

Catering – all accredited participants, except for competing teams, will be given three hot meals a day. During the Challenge, the teams must use carried dry rations for sustenance.

Transportation – all foreign teams must arrange their own transportation to Estonia and back. The foreign participants will receive help from communications officers when they arrive to Estonia. The teams' support crew vehicles will be registered in the mandate. Only vehicles with a vehicle-permit may enter checkpoints. The vehicle-permit will be given to one car only; this is to ensure that the vehicle enters and leaves the checkpoint at pre-determined times. The team's other vehicles are forbidden from entering checkpoints (except the visitors' day checkpoint).

First aid – the base has a first aid point, which provides first aid 24 hours a day. All the checkpoints on the course have first aid capabilities. Should the need arise, teams can receive first aid from the "enemy" (this emergency contact will not result in a penalty).

Communications – during the mandate, the participating teams will be issued military radio units. Members of participating teams may use their own radio communication equipment to maintain contact within the team; their frequencies must be legal in Estonia. The teams will have the capability to contact the organizers and use data and emergency communications during the entire Challenge.

Security – there will be an ambulance/medical crew in constant readiness on the course and at base. The course will be secured by a SAR-crew of at least 4, in constant readiness.

Positions and structure

Important positions:

- Main organizer – Estonian Defence League (EDL)
- Commander of the Challenge – the Commander of EDL
- Chief of Staff of the Challenge – an officer, appointed by the Commander of EDL, who manages the Challenge staff, conducts daily meetings of the Challenge staff and delivers the orders and guidelines given by the Commander of the Challenge.
- Ruling referee – an officer, appointed by the Commander of EDL, who manages and coordinates the referees according to the Challenge instructions and principles.
- Challenge staff (Staff) – managing body of the Challenge, which directs and manages the challenge and makes operational decisions to ensure the continuation of the Challenge.

The Staff has the following duties:

- To provide the teams with necessary information and support.
- To coordinate the actions of the referees and the observers.
- To coordinate resistance.

- To coordinate the actions of the support crews and cooperation with the Estonian Police, Rescue Service, Environmental Board and other national and local services.

During the challenge, all teams, support crews, visitors and observers must follow and obey the orders and directions of the challenge staff.

Staff structure:

- PR and protocol
- Personnel S1
- Course S2
- Operational staff S3
- Logistics S4
- Referees S5
- Communications S6

Participation in the challenge

To participate in the Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge, all Estonian teams must qualify through a preliminary challenge, with the exception of last year's winner. Estonian teams must include at least 2 members who participated in the preliminary challenge.

A maximum of 15 foreign teams will be admitted to the Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge. There can be only 1 team from each country, but the organizer reserves the right to decide otherwise.

Teams

The teams are composed of 4 participants and up to two (2) support crew members. Foreign teams may have more support members.

All members of a team must be a part of the same unit. A team must not include members who have participated in the Admiral Pitka Recon Challenge as staff members, instructors or support crew during the previous two years. In the spirit of fair game, during the registration phase a team may recommend one of their support crew to participate in the Challenge as a referee under the supervision of the ruling referee. A person in this position cannot participate as part of the support crew, which means they are only allowed to communicate with their team as a referee. A support crew member registered as a referee is subordinate to the ruling referee, starting from the time of registration. If a foreign team brings a press representative, they must be registered. After the challenge mandate, they are subject to all of the rights and duties of press.

The course

The course comprises the following three types of sections:

- Checkpoints and mailboxes.
- Territory of the battle command (reconnaissance/rescue mission).
- The rest of the course.

Navigating the course – the course must be navigated on foot and with no outside help. This means contact with other teams (including radio contact) and "enemy" (except being detected) is forbidden. Teams must not collect extra supplies/equipment and/or leave any of their equipment on course. With no prior warning, an equipment check may be performed in checkpoints.

The Challenge staff must be notified immediately if a team member aborts. The teams must move covertly, using the terrain to their advantage. All roads are off limits in terms of movement (except if the Challenge addendum specifies otherwise). Teams are allowed to cross roads. Teams may use footpaths, forest rides and power line clearings (i.e. use of trails and tracks marked with a dotted line on the Challenge map is permitted). During travel, firearms must be loaded with blank cartridges (all magazines must be loaded with blank cartridges) and ready to fire. Without any prior warning, a firearm safety and cleanliness check may be performed in checkpoints. The referee decides on the cleanliness of the firearm. When arriving in a checkpoint, the firearms must be placed in a rifle stack (pyramid) and must be guarded. It is forbidden to aim any firearm at a person. During simulated fire or blank fire, the firearm must be aimed significantly above the target (including vehicles etc.).

1. Checkpoints (CP) – Checkpoints are terrain points, designated according to the challenge scenario and schedule, and marked and manned by referees and instructors. Names of checkpoints in NATO phonetic alphabet:

CP A – Alfa

CP B – Bravo

CP C – Charlie ...etc.

Conduct of checkpoint inspectors – checkpoint inspectors construct the challenge in the checkpoint, mark the area of the challenge and provide the means to complete the challenge (tents, targets, mines etc.). The instructors man the checkpoint with necessary personnel and ensure the safety of completing the checkpoint challenge. The checkpoint inspectors test the readiness of their checkpoint challenge 2 hours before the first team arrive. While the 0 team completes the challenge, the inspectors explain the challenge to the checkpoint referees and make sure the challenge is clear and unambiguous. Depending on the results of the test, they may modify the challenge. The CP commander must co-ordinate these changes with the Staff.

Conduct of teams in checkpoints – the teams must reach each checkpoint according to the schedule given in the mandate. When a team enters a checkpoint, their arrival time is registered. Teams must enter the checkpoints at the assigned time +/- 5 minutes. If a team enters the checkpoint from a wrong direction, they must exit the checkpoint area and re-enter the checkpoint from the correct direction. It is forbidden to observe other teams performing their challenge in the checkpoint. It is forbidden to observe other teams performing their challenge in the checkpoint. The team will have up to 10 minutes to prepare and reach the location of the checkpoint challenge. In the preparation area, the team members prepare for the challenge, according to the instructor's directions. If the challenge is not completed within the allotted time, the team's activities are stopped. After completing or aborting the challenge, the team immediately either proceeds to the course in the direction designated by the referee or moves on to the next challenge. Teams may only move along designated paths in the checkpoints. If necessary, the checkpoints will have access to drinking water. The teams may not supplement or exchange their supplies or give any aid (including giving information about a following checkpoint challenge, carrying others' equipment etc.). Checkpoints

may have a support area where the participants may prepare themselves and their equipment for the following course or contact their support crew (in the presence of a referee).

NB! Checkpoints must be attended even if the team is late!

If a team does not attend a checkpoint, they will receive additional penalty points.

Conduct of support crew members in the checkpoint – a team's support crew may be present at checkpoint challenges only while their team is completing them. Depending on the nature of the checkpoint challenge (if the Challenge scenario so dictates), the duty of the support crew is to aid their team in preparing for their challenge (e.g. preparing their boat). Support crew may only communicate with their team in the support area, which is usually situated near the end of major checkpoints and is clearly marked.

Solving unforeseeable circumstances – In the event of unforeseeable circumstances, the CP commander must immediately notify the Challenge Staff. The final decision about further actions will be made by the Commander of the Challenge.

Mailboxes – in between the checkpoints there may be mailboxes, which the teams must attend in full complement. If a team does not attend a mailbox in full complement, they will receive penalty points. All mailboxes are either manned by a referee or marked with a label. The mailboxes are numbered according to the previous checkpoint. The purpose of the mailboxes is to direct the teams away from dangerous areas (e.g. firing sectors).

2. Territory of the battle command – this is the designated terrain territory in which the mandated battle command (reconnaissance/rescue mission) must be completed.

Conduct of instructors in BC territory – their task is to construct the "enemy" base (or another site, according to the Challenge scenario) as realistically as possible and to man the site realistically.

Conduct of teams in the BC territory – the layout of the area is largely classified i.e. unknown to the teams. The teams are given approximate coordinates and must find the objective themselves.

The teams' support crews are strictly forbidden from entering battle command territory or approaching it (up to a distance of 2 km). Ignoring this rule may result in the offending team's disqualification.

3. The rest of the territory – the territory outside the checkpoints, mailboxes and battle command territory. The organizers have designated this territory to be used for travelling from checkpoint to checkpoint (according to the course map). This territory is an important part of the Challenge course and represents enemy territory with possible real resistance.

Resistance

The resistance is a mock enemy, whose main task is to control all the roads. The resistance fighters are distinguished by a yellow marking; the resistance vehicles have a double F. Their areas of activity are not marked on the teams' maps. Resistance may act throughout all of the challenge territory. In order to catch a team, the resistance unit must have at least as many members as the team (i.e. at least 3 members, as any team must have at least three members). The teams are forbidden from joining in order to bolster their numbers.

A team and/or its member are considered caught if:

- The distance between the team and the resistance is less than 25 m on terrain and the team is unable to retreat covertly.
- The resistance has entered the team's camp or the team has unknowingly entered the territory of a resistance unit.

The team is not considered caught if:

- After an unexpected contact between the team and resistance, the team manages to immediately break contact and leave.
- The team has ambushed the resistance unit and notionally eliminated it and has not been located within 10 minutes (in this case, the resistance patrol may not call for backup within 5 minutes, having been notionally destroyed).

If an argument arises, the team has the right to have the resistance unit summon a referee. In that case, the team must stay put and wait for the referee's decision. If any complaints are submitted at a later time, they will be resolved during the general process of arbitration. Every caught participant must relinquish one of their tickets. If a participant has relinquished all 10 tickets, they are considered "dead" and must abort the Challenge.

ALL FORMS OF PHYSICAL CONTACT ARE FORBIDDEN!

Referees and the scoring system

The organizer will invite military staff members (or retired military staff members) to act as referees who must follow guidelines developed by the organizer.

Duties of the referees:

- To ensure "fair game" during the Challenge.
- To ensure that all teams are able to complete their missions and challenges under equal conditions throughout the Challenge.
- To evaluate the teams' performance when completing their missions and challenges and to measure the results.

In order to fulfill these duties, the referees must:

- Maintain total impartiality throughout the Challenge.
- Give consistent evaluations in terms of similar situations occurring at different times.
- To follow their guidelines and the ruling referee's orders exactly.

The referees do not assign penalty points. The duty of the referees is to measure and record results. If a referee measurement or recording is disputed, a protest must be presented. Cases of possible referee errors will be resolved individually by an arbitration commission who will report the potential referee errors to the Challenge Commander. The actions of the referees will be coordinated by the ruling referee, via the referee staff. The staff will organize, coordinate and observe the activities of the referees throughout the Challenge and maintain constant contact

between the staff and the referees. For this purpose, the referee staff will have an operations log, in which shall be recorded all referee activities and the information they receive about the situations on the course. The referees will receive all the necessary documents for performing their tasks from the referee staff, and must return them immediately after completing the task.

The referees will be divided into two main groups on the course according to the nature of their duties:

- Referees who observe the completing of checkpoint challenges.
- Patrols who accompany the resistance units.

Checkpoint referees:

- They obey the commands given by the CP commanders.
- They observe the performance of the task by the 0 team.
- They observe and evaluate the performance of the tasks according to the guidelines and evaluate the results.
- If needed, they will aid the checkpoint instructors.
- They will communicate with the team and mediate possible issues on site or forward them to the referee staff.
- They make sure that contact between support crews and teams takes place according to the Challenge instructions.
- If needed, they will make sure the equipment a team receives from their support crew (if stated in the instructions) is compliant with the requirements and does not include forbidden items.

The checkpoint referees must arrive at the checkpoint before the 0 team arrives, in order to observe their performance and to take notes that are necessary for later evaluations.

The checkpoint referees will receive the items necessary for their work from the referee staff. After the checkpoint is closed, he/she must immediately return the reports to the staff, which will immediately forward them to the computer centre located at the Challenge staff. The reports must be signed by the ruling referee, who is responsible for the accuracy of their contents. The scoring system is given to the referee staff by the Challenge course master.

Resistance referees:

- They make sure the Challenge instructions are followed in the battle command territory and outside the checkpoints.
- If necessary, they resolve arguments or forward arguments to the referee staff.

The referees' equipment, transportation and other similar matters are arranged by a logistics group which reports to the referee staff and cooperates with the Challenge logistics units. All of the referees' logistical servicing must take place at the Challenge base. An exception will be made for the referees in the resistance and battle command territories. They will be catered at the corresponding unit's base. On the course, the referees must carry necessary outdoor equipment.

Conduct of the referees in the BC territory - they will confirm contacts between the teams and the resistance units, check both sides' correct conduct and, if necessary, resolve any differences and issues on site.

Penalty scoring system

The Challenge results are evaluated based on a penalty system, which means that the team with the least penalty points wins.

Two types of situations are simulated during the Challenge:

- Situations in which the participant can "die" as a result of a mistake (e.g. when crossing a minefield)
 - each mistake results in 12 penalty points.
- Situations in which the participant is required to destroy the "enemy" (e.g. shooting range)
 - each mistake results in up to 3 penalty points.

The maximum number of penalty points may vary depending on the specific challenge. Timed challenges employ the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{team time} - \text{best time}) * N}{(\text{worst time} - \text{best time})}$$

N – maximum number of penalty points from the challenge.

The amount of penalty points resulting from failure to complete the battle command (mission) is approximately equal to the sum of the maximum penalty points of all of the checkpoint challenges. If the battle command is partially completed, the mission complexity and the result's accuracy is taken into account.

The participants will receive detailed instructions on all of the challenges. The participants must reach the checkpoints at specified times +/- 5 minutes. Reaching a checkpoint (mailbox) early results in penalty points.

If a team arrives in a checkpoint more than 5 minutes late, they are given 12 penalty points. If a team arrives in a checkpoint more than 10 minutes late, they are not allowed to complete the checkpoint challenge and are given the maximum number of penalty points for the specific challenge plus 24 penalty points.

If a team arrives late in a checkpoint with more than one challenge, they are unable to complete the challenge the scheduled starting time of which has passed, and thus receive the maximum number of penalty points for these challenges plus 24 penalty points. Even if a team is late to the checkpoint, they must register with the checkpoint referees. If a team misses a checkpoint, they will receive the maximum number of penalty points for each uncompleted challenge and an additional 48 penalty points for missing the checkpoint.

The teams are not allowed to wait for "their time" in the checkpoint neutral zone (1 km radius circle around the CP); they must delay outside the neutral area. In the event of a detected violation of this rule, the referees and CP instructors are allowed to take one resistance ticket per violating participant caught. If a support crew member is detected in the CP neutral zone before their team's

arrival, the violation will be noted and the offending team will receive penalty points according to the ruling referee's decision.

The team must attend the course mailboxes in full complement. For each member who does not attend a mailbox, the team will receive at least 12 penalty points. This rule excludes participants who have aborted (this must be communicated to the Challenge staff before arriving at the mailbox) and have left the course.

In the mandate, each participant receives 10 resistance tickets, worth up to 12 penalty points. If a participant loses their ticketbook, said participant (i.e. the team) receives 120 penalty points. If a team loses one member, they receive penalty points according to the Challenge instructions. If a team loses two members, the others may not continue.

Each lost item of personal equipment (including the team number) results in 3–12 penalty points. Loss of weapons, ammo (excluding blank cartridges and including flare gun and flares), team medkit and radio equipment results in 12 penalty points. An unclean firearm results in 6 penalty points. Equipment checks may be performed several times during the Challenge, with no prior warning.

In case of violations not mentioned in this section, the chief of staff will issue a penalty according to the ruling referee's recommendation, on a case by case basis.

Protests

The protest must be filed in the checkpoint's support area, or, if the checkpoint lacks one, the waiting area. The protest must be filed on the official protest form in writing in English, and will be forwarded to the checkpoint referee. The protest must include the description of the event, its location, time and the names of witnesses. If possible, the violated provision of the Challenge instructions should

be noted. The protests will be resolved by an arbitration commission. Any protests must be filed before 30 minutes has passed since the last team finished the Challenge.

Safety

As the Challenge course includes highly dangerous terrain (about 50% of the course is marshes and bogs, which are difficult to navigate), all participants (including support crew) are required to read and memorize these instructions. This is necessary in order to ensure the safety of participants on the course.

General

All participants are required to monitor the physical condition of their teammates throughout the Challenge. If a participant develops health problems, the team must act according to the severity of the situation (by notifying the referees or the Challenge staff or resolving the situation in another manner).

The participants may not issue orders which may jeopardize the lives or health of their fellow participants.

In the course of completing the battle commands, the participants may not jeopardize the lives and health of themselves or others.

On the Challenge course, each participant is responsible for their own life and health (participation is voluntary). The organizers will do everything in their power to ensure the safety of the participants.

All checkpoints and other dangerous areas will have first aid crews and doctors present.

If the participants encounter someone in need of first aid during the Challenge, they are obligated to give first aid and notify the Challenge organizers.

Bogs and marshes

The mandatory equipment of each participant includes 15 m of 400 kg tensile strength rope, which is used to provide security when traversing bogs and marshes. When traversing bogs and marshes (may have hidden pools) it is recommended to connect the team with ropes.

Before entering a bog or a marsh, all team members are advised to find/cut a (approximately) 2,5 m stick to ensure their safety when walking on the soft surface.

If you do get stuck in a pool, it is important to keep calm and not struggle. You need to support the stick you were carrying on the edge of the pool and place your weight on it to stop sinking. When you are thrown a rope by your teammates, you must not pull on the rope (this would pull them towards the pool and make it harder for them to rescue you), but instead attempt to slowly pull your feet out of the pool, one by one.

The organizer will position rescue groups wearing reflector vests and standing in visible locations in bogs and marshes. Rescue groups are not part of the resistance. The rescue groups are tasked with providing guidance and aid to participants in trouble.

After a participant has been pulled out of a bog pool, his/her clothes must be changed or dried (the pools have extremely cold water) and the incident must be reported to the Challenge staff directly or via a nearby rescue group.

Shooting range

Live sidearm ammunition may only be taken out of storage in the shooting ranges. On the course, sidearm ammunition must be stored in a sealed box in the backpack. The team will receive ammunition for their assault rifles in the firing range preparation area. Live ammunition may only be loaded into magazines once the firing range checkpoint referee gives the order, immediately before the shooting exercise begins.

The participants may open fire only after the referee gives the order.

After completing the firing exercise, the participants are required to unload the firearm and present it to the referee.

On the course, only blanks may be used. The magazines must hold no live ammunition while on the course.

Explosive devices

As there was intense combat in Estonian territory during the Second World War, it is entirely possible to find an explosive device on the course. Be careful!

If a team finds an explosive device, they must report it to the Challenge staff by radio or inform the course master or the referees in the next checkpoint.

In order to make the explosive device easier to find, the report must include its coordinates and nearby landmarks. The participants must mark the discovered explosive device clearly, to make it easier to spot for the rescue services.

Participants are forbidden from touching or attempting to disarm any explosive device they may find.

Adder bite

Participants must watch out on the course, as adders are found in Estonian forests. In case of an adder bite:

- The team must immediately notify the Challenge staff or checkpoint referees, stating their exact coordinates.
- The person who was bitten must be laid down, given water to drink (never alcohol) and guarded until the emergency service arrives.

OTHER RULES

The teams are not allowed:

1. To use methods of transportation not described in the Challenge instructions.
2. To use outside help on the course and in checkpoints (i.e. to add, trade, resupply supplies, receive food aid, receive direct instructions about the course, checkpoints and mailboxes etc.).
3. To use doping or narcotics (if offence is suspected, the team may be submitted to a test).
4. To join with other teams in order to make traversing the course easier.
5. To use the radio to communicate with other teams (permitted only in an emergency).
6. To tamper with the contents of common mailboxes or take competing teams' documents.
7. To alter or tamper with the mailboxes' visible markings.
8. To use civilian footwear on course or in checkpoints (participants must use army boots or wellingtons as spare footwear).
9. To disobey the orders of instructors or referees.
10. To hide or remove the team's marking.
11. To change team members during the Challenge.
12. To load an automatic firearm with live ammunition outside a firing range.
13. The carrying of a carbine in the backpack or attached to the backpack.
14. The deliberate destruction of equipment.

THE AFOREMENTIONED VIOLATIONS MAY BE PUNISHED BY DISQUALIFICATION OF THE ENTIRE TEAM!

Support crew members, journalists and spectators are not allowed:

1. To give any external help to the teams (except for emergency first aid, in which case the Challenge Staff must be immediately informed).

2. To travel the course in own vehicles to aid the teams (all movement on course must be coordinated and organized by the staff).
3. To impede the teams while they traverse the course or complete challenges.
4. To interfere with the work of the staff or the referees.
5. To use a camera flash when taking pictures of checkpoint challenges at night time.
6. Support crew members are not allowed to remove their team markings.
7. Support crew members are forbidden from entering areas of 1 km radius surrounding the checkpoints and mailboxes (2 km in the battle command territory).

The organizers and referees are not allowed:

1. To consume alcohol or be intoxicated or under the influence of narcotics while on duty.
2. To give outside help which may alter the outcome of the Challenge.
3. To show bias for particular teams while evaluating challenges or resolving issues.
4. To disclose confidential information about the Challenge.

General rules of the base

While in base territory, the orders of the commandant's personnel must be obeyed.

The base camp has mandatory designated sleep hours (silent hours).

The silent hours begin at 01:00 and end at 07:00.

General rules of the base:

1. It is forbidden to bring pets to the base.
2. Children must not be left unsupervised.
3. Swimming is only allowed in designated locations.
4. Open flame is only allowed in designated locations.
5. Any unauthorized camping is forbidden.
6. Vehicle speed is limited in base territory, designated with appropriate signs.
7. Vehicles must be parked according to the parking rules.

Aborting and pausing the challenge

The challenge is aborted if the circumstances are such that is impossible or dangerous to people's lives and health to continue. The Commander of the Challenge has the right to abort the Challenge.

If the Challenge is aborted, the scores recorded in the last checkpoint which all of the teams passed through will be used to determine the standings.

Rules of access

During the Challenge, both the base and the rest of the course are subject to limited access. Access is regulated using a system of ID tags. The tag will include the person's first and last name, home country and their role in the Challenge. Depending on the role, the person may have access to various territories and information. To better distinguish the roles, the ID tags are colour coded.

- Yellow – Challenge staff (access to all information and territories).
- Green – teams and support crews (access to information available in the information tent).

- Blue – referees (access to course information and all territories).
- White – press, visitors (access to information available in the information tent and access to designated locations on course).

A complete list of roles and examples of ID cards will be put on display in the base information tent.