

Despondent Profile and Reflex Tasking

Descriptive Statistics

Statistic	Despondent
n (# cases)	65
Age (SD)	37 (16)
Males	76%
Females	24%
Uninjured	34%
Injured	11%
Deceased	55%
Investigative	10%

Distance from the PLS (Despondent)

Distance from the PLS	Miles	Kilometers
Mean	1.4	2.2
S.D.	3.3	5.3
Median	0.2	0.3
Range	0-20	0-32.2
25%	0.1	0.2
50%	0.2	0.3
75%	1.6	2.6
Max Zone	5.0 (96%)	8.0 (96%)

Find Location

Location	Despondent
Structure	8%
Yard (field)	4%
Drainage	8%
Woods	33%
Brush/Briar	-
Road	-
Linear	13%
Other	8% (cliff)

Behavioral Profile

- Two distinctive patterns emerge for distance from the Initial Planning Point (bimodal distribution)
- Most subject simply seeking to get "just out of sight" (50% found within 0.2 miles of IPP)
- Second group of subjects seek a "specific location", often scenic or significant in their life history
- Location may be the method of suicide (cliffs, water)
- Those seeking scenic or significant location are willing to travel (Max zone 96%=5.0 miles)
- No subjects really "lost"
- Many survivors walked out of the woods on their own.
- Subjects typically (33%) located in open woods (remind teams to look up)
- Subjects avoid brush/briars
- Age or sex does not predict "just out of sight" or "specific location" behavior
- Older makes had highest mortality rate (>75%)
- Despondent profile has high mortality rate (55%)

Reflex Tasking

- Early use of trackers at initial planning point (IPP)
- Early use of tracking/trailing dogs at IPP or clues
- Investigation (methods, buildings, danger to rescuers, significant locations, etc)
- Check segments within 0.25 miles with air-scent dogs, sweeps, and grids.
- This profile may represent an exception to grid search as a last resort
- Through systematic search of residence, should be repeated throughout search
- Early deployment of air-scent dog teams into woods and drainage's, start near IPP
- Modified trail/sector along roads and trails
- Hasty to all scenic/significant locations
- Cut for sign along roadways and trails
- Subjects may flee, hide or move. Areas will need to be researched with continual importance of looking for sign
- Subject may have a fear of authority, consider not wearing field uniforms
- Develop contingency plan if actively evasive (may require obtaining emergency care order)
- Containment important along with road patrols
- Search urgency high
- After initial tasks, search should continue to concentrate around IPP and then expand to all possible significant locations

Study Methods

The database used to collect this data has been described in a previous paper on [Alzheimer's](#). The following modifications were made. Inclusion criteria: Following terms appeared on missing person record; suicidal, depressed, despondent. Exclusion criteria: Previous mental retardation, dementia, current psychosis, accidents, homicide, or abduction.