

## TACTICAL TROOP OPERATIONAL PLAN

**Date: 2013-10-13**

HQ File No.	Div File No.	Unit File No.	Other File Ref.
	2013-83622		

### **CAPTION:**

Shale Gas Protests, (Line 14 exploration)  
Line 14 (Highway 11, NB)  
2013-09-29 and on-going

### **SYNOPSIS OF THE DISPUTE:**

Shale gas exploration is a contentious issue in New Brunswick. The Provincial Government is supporting the development of this resource and has pledged that exploration of shale gas will continue.

Various opponent groups to shale gas have expressed their displeasure with the Governments policy and have vowed to protest and hinder the exploration contractors in their work.

*Intelligence and investigation indicates that First Nations and other protest groups are actively engaged and committed to protest action in Kent County, NB.*

<b>Local Jurisdiction:</b>	RCMP South-East District
<b>District Commander:</b>	Insp. John Warr
<b>Incident Commander:</b>	Supt. Gilles Maillet Insp. John Coleman
<b>Tactical Troop Site Commander:</b>	Sgt. Rick Bernard
<b>J Division Tact Troop</b>	Sgt Harry Brown
<b>H &amp; L Division Tact Troop</b>	Insp Mike Payne
<b>C Division Tact Troop</b>	S/Sgt. Brian Byrne

## **BACKGROUND**

On September 29, 2013 at approximately 15:00 hours, a small group of protesters overran the entrance to the SWN/ISL compound on Route 134, just east of Rexton, NB. By doing so they established a foothold at the entrance of the compound thereby preventing the shale gas exploration company from beginning their work as scheduled.

This protest action quickly grew and a very aggressive component of the protest group took control of the entrance and the portion of Route 134 directly in front of the compound.

As this protest action developed, the number of protesters at the site has grown and it is estimated that as many as 150 protesters were on site and in the compound at any given time since the beginning of the protest action. The morning hours have consistently seen 30 or less protesters on site.

The protesters are now demanding that SWN cease all shale gas exploration activity in the Province of New Brunswick and they have gone so far as to issue an "Eviction Notice" to SWN.

On-going negotiations with the group have failed to date. The protesters have been buoyed by various statements and actions of different interested parties within the dispute. It is apparent from the mood of the aggressive component within the main protest group that these statements and actions have emboldened them and their demands have become increasingly forceful and more frequent. Threats of violence, continued occupation and property damage have been accompanying each set of demands.

On Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of October, word of a possible breakthrough that would have seen the SWN vehicles and equipment leave the compound, was being worked on by a working group, lead by an Independent Third Party Negotiator. This was the same working group which had been struck at a meeting with the Premier of New Brunswick and the Chief of the Elsipogtog First Nation.

The agreement was that SWN would be allowed to remove all their vehicles and equipment from the compound but no other information was made available so there were misconceptions about the agreement. The main misconception was that SWN was going to leave the compound and leave the province altogether. On October 10<sup>th</sup>, once it was learned that SWN intended to continue with Shale Gas exploration, the deal to allow SWN to leave the compound fell through and the situation at the protest site remained status quo.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

***The General Protest Site:*** The protest site is an area on Route 134, between Exit 53 (off of Route 11) and the Village of Rexton limit. This site includes a compound, on a property owned by JD Irving Ltd, the surfaced roadway of Route 134, and the entrance to the Hannay Road (from Route 134). The protest site has grown to include the grounds, fields and forests adjacent to the areas described above.

Access to the protest site can be made from Exit 53 or from the Rexton side of Route 134. As well, there is an ATV trail leading from the south-bound off-ramp of Route 11. Other access to the site is made by the forest areas surrounding the compound.

The protest area has come to resemble a small village, complete with a tented command area with food services and bathroom facilities. Stocks of firewood are also on site to keep the protestors warm.

Of note, is the proximity of the actual protest site to the Elsipogtog First Nation. This community is but a 10 minute drive to the site and it is anticipated that once the operation starts, cell phone and social media advisories will be sent out from the protestors. The same can be said for non-aboriginal protestors living in the Kent County area.

***Compound:*** The compound is a clearing to the North of Route 134 between Route 11 and the Village of Rexton. It is owned by Irving Corporation and is being used by ISL (SWN) as a staging area for the exploration equipment. Within this compound, there is a gated area (six foot chain link fence) inside which the exploration equipment is located. The gate does not provide much security since it is vulnerable to persons being able to crawl under it, knock it down or throw things over it. On a few occasions, protestors have been able to open one of the gates and stand at the entrance.

***Entrance to the Compound:*** The only vehicle entrance to the compound is a narrow driveway leading from Route 134 to the compound clearing. A gate is located near the opening of the compound and the protestors have taken up a position in this narrow driveway on the outside of the fence. Protestor fortifications include the positioning of a vehicle at the gate (nose toward the gate) and several felled trees on the east-side of the driveway. There are two portable shelters placed on the shoulder of the roadway, directly in front of the driveway. These shelters are positioned a little to the east side of this driveway so they are not completely in front of the driveway. Finally, there are two ATV trails that facilitate foot access to the compound. The north ATV trail is situated off the beginning of the south-bound off-ramp of Route 11 and leads to the north-east corner of the compound. The south ATV trail leads from Route 134 (east of the driveway) to the south end of the compound. The north ATV access is still controlled by the police and is being used for ISL workers to access to the site.

**Roadway:** The roadway portion of the protest site is used mainly as an access to the various locations in the site and access into and out of the site. Protesters are often seen milling about on the roadway, gathering in groups and chanting. The shoulders of the roadway are often used for sitting areas. The Hannay Road connects to Route 134 from the south. There is a tent village that has appeared on the south-east field at the intersection of Hannay Road and Route 134.

There were tall trees felled on Route 134 on the east and west sides of the driveway entrance to the Compound. Since then these trees have been removed and Route 134 has been partially reopened to traffic..

**Exit 53:** Exit 53 is an overpass and on/off-ramp system to bring Route 11 traffic off the highway and into Rexton and toward Galloway and Ste-Anne. There is a police checkpoint established between the intersection of this off-ramp and the Hannay Road. This exit was closed until recently when a partial reopening of Route 134 occurred.

**Route 134 (Rexton side):** A police check point has been set up between the village limit on Route 134 and the Compound driveway. Route 134 now has one lane reopened to two way traffic alternating. Vehicles are now allowed to park in the field on the Hannay Road and the flow of traffic is control by members on scene. Traffic is only allowed to flow in one direction at a time.

### ***Accessibility to the Compound:***

All the areas mentioned in this section are accessible by foot and are within walking distance of each other. ATV trails are accessible on foot. The North Trail has been used by 4X4 police vehicles.

## **OFFICER SAFETY HAZARDS**

Numerous officer-safety hazards are present in the area. Fortifications have been placed by the protestors, consisting of and not limited to tents, vehicles, portable toilets, travel trailer, and camp fires. These fortifications, although not insurmountable, provide concealment for protestors.

The number of sites within the protest area and compound serve as an officer safety hazard as they present a need to deal with each, simultaneously, which will have a depleting effect on human resources and intervention teams at the time of deployment.

The geographical area contains many items and landforms that may pose risks to police personnel and other items that may be used as projectiles. The thick forest provides

concealment/ cover for protestors to engage with police. Although the progression of the fall season is seeing many trees losing foliage and lessening concealment.

Recent information received from an independent third party negotiator indicates that the "Warrior" group have prepared and placed items at strategic locations that are referred to as either alarms or booby traps. During the day, and at night, there are individuals walking throughout the area to try to detect any police action or movement throughout the woods.

There is sourced information that firearms are readily accessible to certain individuals at the protests site. Up to this time, there is no confirmed sighting of firearms at the protest site. Sources on site have indicated that handlers will be made aware when and if firearms are seen at the protest site.

## **HUMAN FACTOR**

The protestors are comprised of several groups within the site. Among these groups is the presence of protestors dressed in camouflage clothing who have taken an aggressive stance and have displayed an eagerness to provoke a physical confrontation. This group is displaying an elevated level of commitment to their cause and they seem to have a rudimentary knowledge of basic planning and tactics.

There are other groups within the protest area are made up of peace activists, media bloggers, elderly persons, local youth, and even small children.

## **EXPECTED SITUATION AT PROTEST SITE AND BEGINNING OF OPERATION:**

Current intelligence, observations by members as well as HASP surveillance indicates that approx. 30 protestors stay at the protest site overnight (divided between compound entrance and Hannay Road field). These observations have been made between 06:00-07:00. Beginning at approx. 11:00 the number of protestors begins to increase to a maximum of 70-100. This number is larger during weekends and special events at the protest site.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Ensure safety for protesters and public, SWN/ ISL workers, and police;
2. To clear the protest area of all protest action and to fully reopen Route 134;
3. To secure SWN and ISL equipment from damage;
4. To secure and facilitate the safe exit of SWN and ISL employees and assets from the compound.
5. Arrest persons committing offences at the scene and those who have committed offences.

## HOW THE OBJECTIVES WILL BE MET:

*This portion of the operational plan is divided into four separate stages to achieve the objectives. This plan will propose actions in the lead up to the actual tactical troop deployment, referred to as "Phase 1 - Pre-Operational". The second step will describe the sequence of actions taken by the Tactical Troops referred to as "Phase 2 - Tactical Troop Deployment". The third segment of this plan refers to the Post-Operational actions to allow the SWN equipment to be removed from the compound referred to as "Phase 3 - Post-Operational". The fourth phase will describe the scale down of resources referred to as "Phase 4 - De-Escalation."*

### Phase 1 - PRE-OPERATIONAL:

- 1) C Division Tactical notified 36 hours before commencement of operation.
  - a) C Division to troop is informed of date, time and location of briefing and to travel by bus along with support vehicles. (Contact person: S/Sgt. Brian Byrne) (*member responsible: Sgt. Rick Bernard*)
- 2) H Division Tactical Troop notified 36 hours before commencement of operation.
  - a) H Division Troop to be informed of date, time and location of briefing and to travel by bus along with support vehicles and to bring 10 marked police vehicles. (contact person: Insp. Mike Payne) (*member responsible: Sgt. Rick Bernard*)
- 3) Tactical Troop members assigned to West check point, East Checkpoint and ATV trail will be replaced with Non-Tactical Troop members to perform these duties.
  - a) This transition will need to be made 24 hours prior to the commencement of the operation.
  - b) This will require a total of 24 members (12 members 17:00-19:00 and 12 members 19:00-07:00) to resource checkpoints equally at East checkpoint, West checkpoint and ATV trail. (*member responsible: Sgt. JC Boudreau*)
- 4) 24 hours before commencement of operation 3 unmarked police vehicles will be staged at West checkpoint (*member responsible Sgt JC Boudreau*).
- 5) Area and resident notifications:
  - a) School closure: advise school superintendant before 06:00. This could include Bonar Law High School (Rexton Middle school and Rexton Elementary School if applicable). (Contact person Beth Stiles V1 - Personal ).
    - i) Official school closure announcement will be made shortly thereafter. (*Member responsible Sgt JC Boudreau*).
  - b) Telephone advisory to residents of the immediate area. (*Member responsible Sgt JC Boudreau*)

**Phase 2 - TACTICAL TROOP DEPLOYMENT**

- 1) At 18:00 hrs on the day before the operation Commanders from H, C and J Division Tactical Troops, ERT, Ident, ORT and PDS brief, with the Incident Commander, at CFB Moncton.  
(Contact person: Sgt. Rick Bernard)
  - a) The reason for this briefing is to properly inform and discuss the operational plan with the command group and to confirm operational capabilities and develop risk mitigation strategies.
  - b) At 03:00 hrs on the date of the operation all troops and support units will arrive at CFB Moncton for the Pre-Operational briefing and kit up.
    - i) H and C Division will equip to either *full tactical gear (Level 4)* or *QRT uniform (PC4 and safety glasses required)* as directed by Incident Commander depending on the current situation.
    - ii) J Division Tactical troop will equip to *QRT uniform with PC4 gas mask and safety glasses.*
      - (1) All other assisting units will require PC4 gas mask and safety glasses.
    - iii) Individual troop Communications capabilities will be tested by the individual troops and overall communications between the Tactical Troop Site Command and the individual troop commanders will also be tested.
- 2) At 04:00 QRT4, 5, 6 and J Div EMRT leave CFB Moncton in marked police vehicles to stage at Richibucto Detachment.
  - a) 2 members per PC in Lev 2 uniform.
  - b) Total of 26 members in 13 marked PC's
- 3) At 05:00 hrs H Division Tactical Troop leaves CFB Moncton by motor coach. H Division Tactical troop will be accompanied by 2 marked police vehicles from within their troop along with QRT1 (8 members in 4 marked police vehicles), 2 PDS member teams and ORT. To stage at Cocagne Marina in Cocagne, NB
- 4) At 05:00 hrs C Division Tactical Troop leaves CFB Moncton by motor coach. C Division Tactical troop will be accompanied QRT2 and QRT3 (16 members in 8 marked police vehicles) and ERT member. To stage at the Cocagne Marina in Cocagne, NB.
- 5) H.A.S.P. to be on scene performing surveillance at 05:00 hrs on day of operation and relaying current video and thermal imaging, to detect any persons in the woods before and during the operation, to Incident Command. (Contact person: JP Charest V1 - Personal member assigned Cst. Justin Helm)
- 6) Following a briefing at Bouctouche Post at 05:00, traffic plan members (12 members in 6 marked Police vehicles) will be staged at Auberge Bouctouche. (See attached traffic plan)

**Note:** From this point forward (all Tactical Troop/QRT/PDS/ORT deployments will be at direction of Site Command for Tactical Troop and ERT). All QRT's are able to be re-deployed at the discretion of the Tactical Troop Commander.

- 7) C Division Tactical Troop/ J Div QRT2 and QRT3 and arrive at North Trail Check Point (Point A) and proceed to Northeast corner of compound clearing (Point B). Await further directions from Tactical Troop Site Command.

- a) J Division QRT2 and QRT3 and the C Division Tactical Troop to Point A.
- 8) C Division Tactical Troop leaves Point A and proceeds in formation to north edge of Route 134 with task of clearing/arresting protestors and acting as a barrier to prevent protestors from accessing compound.
  - a) J Division QRT 2 and QRT3 and ERT remain at compound with task of securing compound during operation and accompanying ISL employees to entrance of ATV Trail.
- 9) H Division Tactical Troop/J Div QRT1/1 PDS/ORT/J Div EMRT proceed to northbound exit ramp of Exit 53, disembark buses and proceed Westbound on Route 134 through East Checkpoint with task of clearing the Hannay Road site and moving protestors West on Route 134 to a point to be determined by Tactical Troop Site Command.
  - a) H Division Tactical troop will be accompanied by 2 marked police vehicles to be tasked with forming a physical barricade for troop if necessary and at discretion of Tactical Troop Commander.
  - b) J Division QRT1/1 PDS remain at East Checkpoint to assist members already at this post.
  - c) The ORT/J Div EMRT stages at East Checkpoint to be available to assist C or H/L Tactical troops.
- 10) Two unmarked police vehicles are positioned to physically block Route 134 at West Checkpoint.
  - a) West Checkpoint is moved (along with all members) from current location to intersection of Route 134 and Beatties Street. West/Route 505 (this will provide a route of egress to protestors).
  - b) J Division QRT 4 and QRT5/PDS proceed to West Checkpoint to assist members already at this post. Marked police vehicles will be positioned to physically block Route 134.
- 11) QRT6 stage at Exit 53.
- 12) Once the C Div Tactical Troop is in place at the forest inside the compound and H Div Tactical Troop is in place on Route 134 at the tree line entering the camp site on the south edge of Route 134, both troops will engage protestors by:
  - a) Communicating to the protestors to:
    - i) Leave the area.
    - ii) That they are committing a criminal offence by remaining at this site.
    - iii) That they will be arrested.
  - b) C Div Troops will use a line formation and sweep anyone out of the forest area between the compound and Route 134.
  - c) Simultaneously, H Div Tactical Troop will engage the protestors by:
    - i) Sweeping across the campground in a line motion with its left flank performing a right wheel motion to flush out the campground.
      - (1) This maneuver will be supported by ERT as there are tents, a teepee and a trailer to clear.
    - ii) Advancing and engaging protestors by pushing them back toward the west checkpoint past the SWN compound.



**NOTE:** At the discretion of Tactical Troop Commanders, Tactical Troop Site Command and S.O.P.'s, decisions will be made on how to best deal with any threat or resistance encountered (see Tactical Decision Making Matrix).

As the Operational Plan objectives are being met, it is anticipated that there may be a number of arrests. Tactical Troop arrest protocols will be employed to apprehend the arrestees and initially catalog the circumstances of arrest. Each QRT will have J Division Prisoner processing sheets as per normal operating procedures. Prisoner support capabilities will be provided from district members. Prisoners apprehended will be handed over to the Prisoner Support Unit (See attached Prisoner Transport Plan).

Once all the initial Tactical Troop objectives are met, the secondary objectives of holding a tactical position will be directed by Tactical Troop Site Command using all available resources.

### Phase 3 - POST-OPERATIONAL

- 1) Once area is secure, DTI with assistance of ORT will clear all necessary debris/trees from Route 134 and Compound entrance to allow SWN equipment to be transported from compound to Route 11.
  - a) Should tow trucks be required, they will be called in as necessary.
- 2) Once protest area is cleared of debris, DTI and ORT leave protest area.
- 3) SWN proceed to compound for removal of equipment (estimated 3 hours from time of first call to complete removal). (Contact person: Insp. John Warr)
- 4) At direction of Incident Command, Tactical troops, QRT's and support units are strategically deployed in order to secure area until SWN equipment in compound is removed.

### Phase 4 – DE-ESCALATION

Once the operational goals and objectives have been met and the equipment is out of the compound, Tactical Troop, ERT, PDS, ORT and EMRT will be able to be stood down and redeployed in an orderly and strategic manner to ensure the convoy of equipment is not waylaid along the way to the new staging area.

- 1) Once the operation is over, the Tactical Troop Site Commander will obtain status reports from each Team i/c, and Troop Commander.
  - a) At this point, decisions will be made on the redeployment of each team to other support roles.
- 2) As the convoy or vehicles leave the compound, QRT's (which have the mobility to use police cars) will be tasked to escort SWN vehicles to the new SWN staging compound.
  - a) Redeployment will be at the discretion of the Tactical Troop Site Commander.
- 3) Once the compound is empty, it is anticipated that this site will lose its focus and a scaling back of Tactical Troop and other resources will be likely.
  - a) C Division Tactical Troop will be the first to be released and will be sent out of the area to the Cocagne Marina for debriefing and await further direction.
  - b) H Division Tactical Troop will remain on site until the protest action has dissipated.

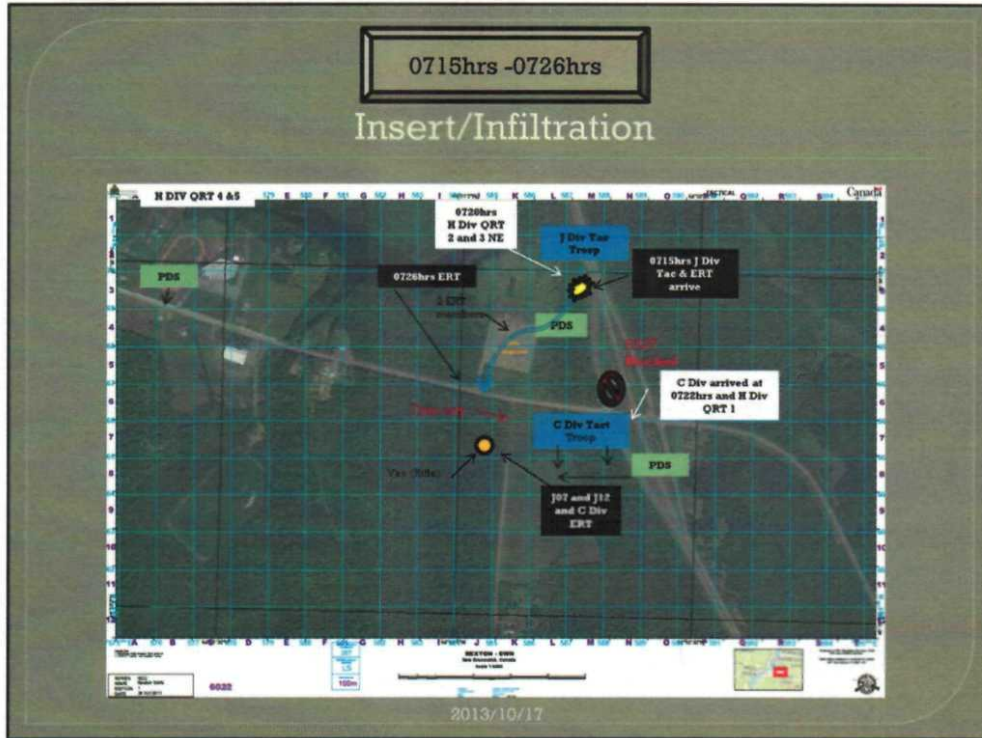
- i) Communication with the remaining protesters will be made to advise them that the site is empty and to leave the area.
- 4) QRT6 will be tasked with enacting a preventative traffic plan to address any situations where protesters decide to take to the highway to block SWN vehicles from getting to their new staging area.

Plan prepared by:

Sgt. Rick Bernard (Tactical Troop Site Commander)  
Sgt. Harry Brown (J Division Tactical troop 2 i/c)

**Shale Gas Protest  
Rexton, NB  
October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

RCMP Public Order Unit (Tac  
Troop) and ERT's  
**Sequence of Events**



0715hrs – “J” Div Tac Troop and ERT arrive, Hwy 11, Exit 53 south, infiltration via ATV trail.

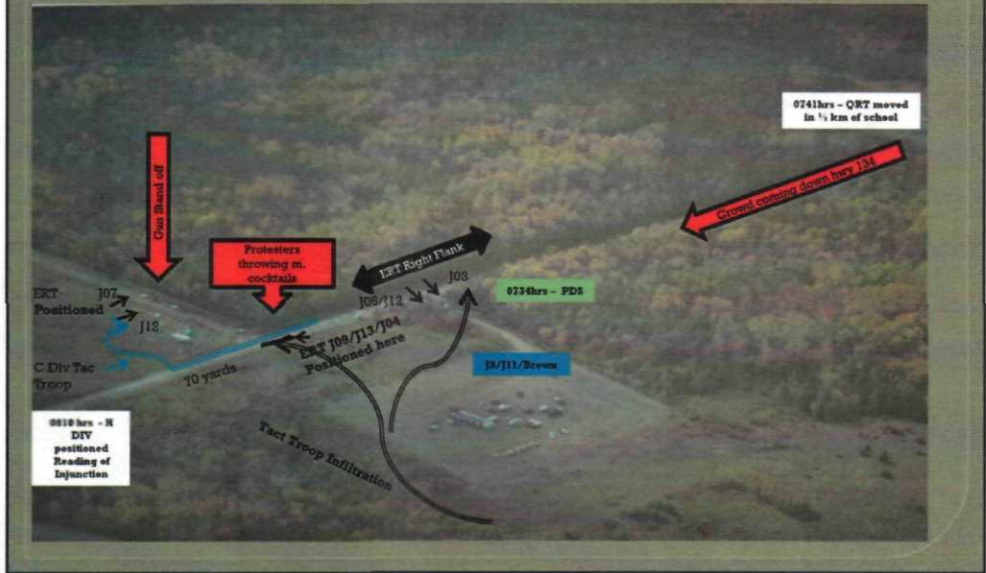
0722 hrs- “C” Div Tac Troop and ERT arrive, Exit 53, infiltration via Hwy 134 east.

H Div QRT 4 and 5, PCs at Centennial Ave. /Hwy 134,

H Div QRT 6 and J Div IA parked at Richibucto RCMP office

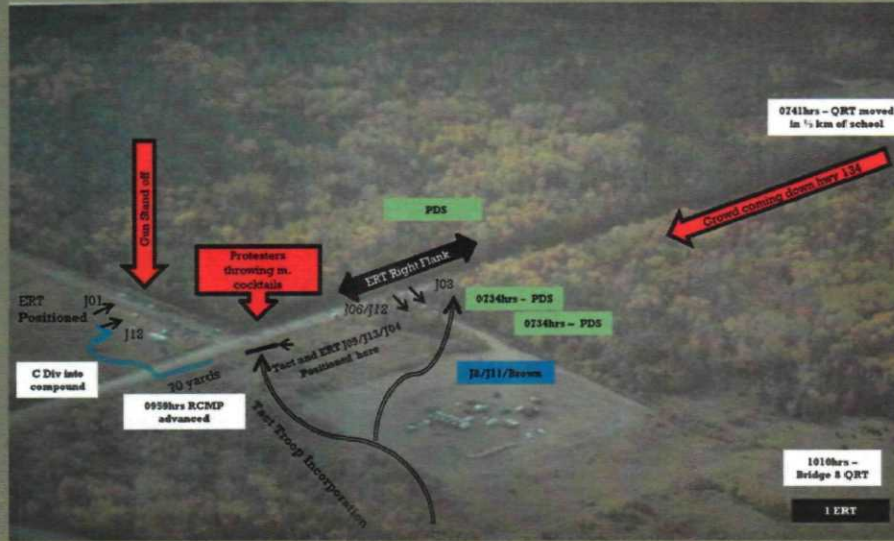
0726hrs -0958hrs

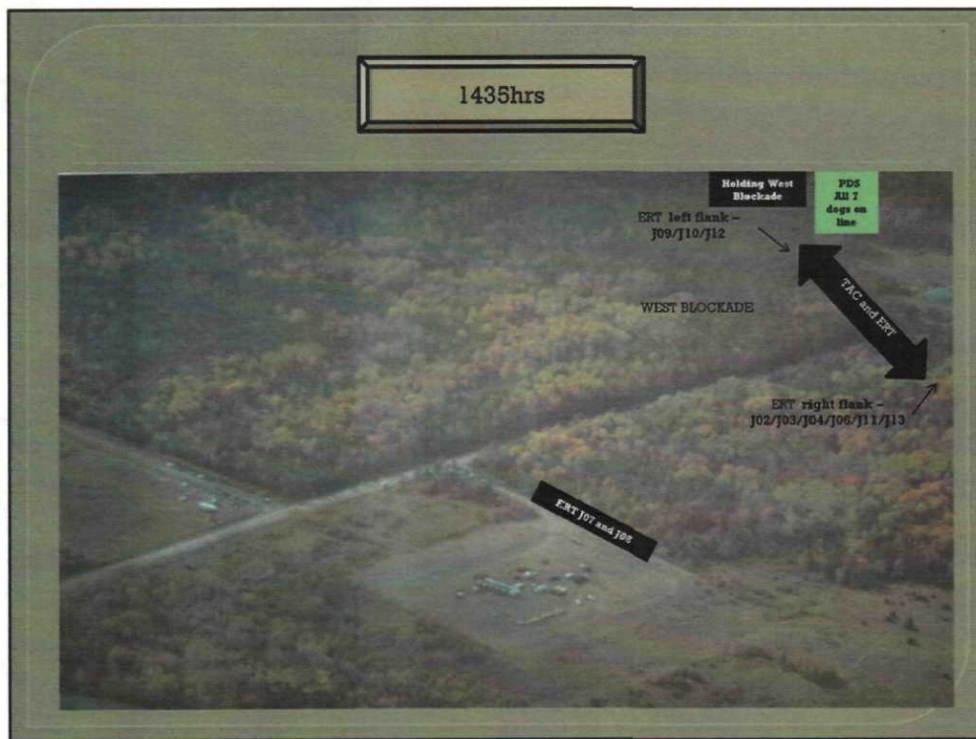
### Standoff Continues



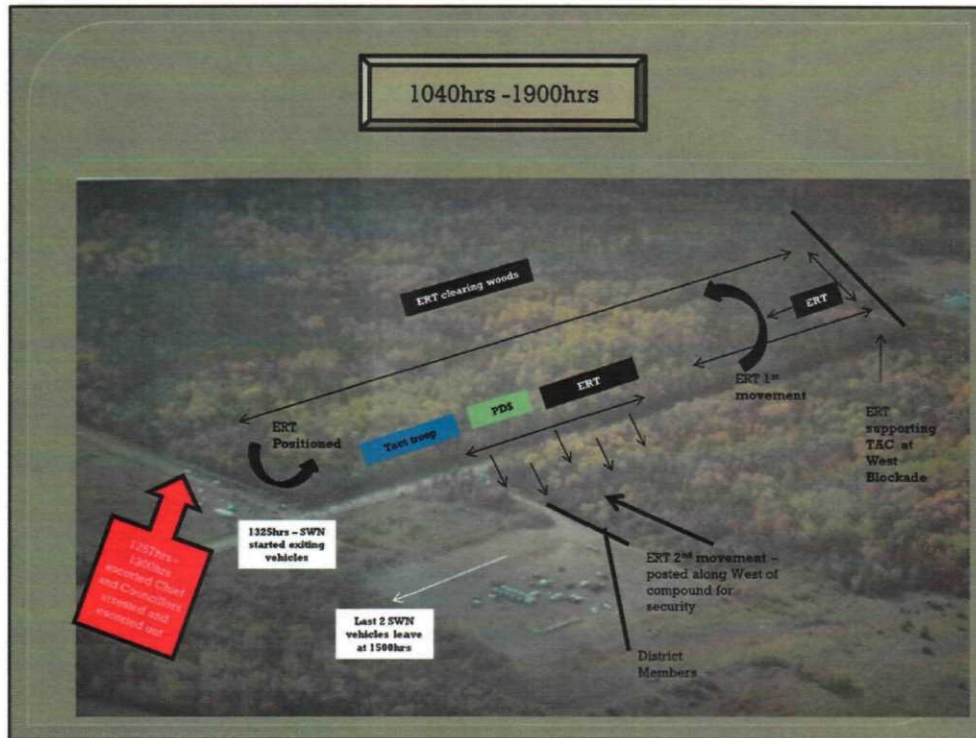
0959hrs - 1040hrs

### Advancement into compound





1435hrs – Tact troop update – 70 plus support members at West Blockade



- 1258hrs – Another rush of protesters/rocks- Request Level 4 TAC at West Blockade
- 1312hrs – 1<sup>st</sup> PC noticed on fire
- 1315hrs – 2<sup>nd</sup> PC noticed on fire
- 1319hrs – 3<sup>rd</sup> PC noticed on fire
- 1319 hrs- “H” and “L” Div. Tac return to Exit 53 to dress to Level 4
- 1325hrs – SWN started to remove vehicles and equipment
- 1500hrs – SWN equipment and crates removed
- 1621hrs - Level 4 arrives at West Blockade – “H” & “L”
- 1638hrs – EDU arrives on site to deal with IED’s
- 1708hrs – Protesters went in to woods at West blockade, encountered ERT. Protesters had bear spray and baton. Sock rounds were fired. Suspects retreated.
- \*\* Between 1040 hrs and 1900 hrs, there were four (4) advances by protestors on the West blockade



## Exfil/Extract 18:39 hrs



- 1829 hrs- Exfil and extraction plan communicated to all members on scene by Sgt. Bernard
- 1839 hrs- Exfil commenced, with Tac Troop in double file, with ERT covering rear during movement away from West Blockade
- 1843 hrs- Exfil slowed to remove PC's parked on Hwy 134
- 1918 hrs- All personnel and RCMP asset's extracted from scene.