The **Ruckus Society**

Scouting Training Manual

Version 1.0
4/13/2003

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The Ruckus Scouting Manual

Scouting for Direct Action Campaigning

Like much of the action development process, scouting is a combination of the artistic and mechanical. It can involve something as simple as looking over the place you want to sit down in the road or picket. Or it can be complex, involving great amounts of background research, repeated visits, or unpalatable risks. Mechanically, an activist scouts the physical qualities of the potential action site. Hazards, access, and assembly points are typical scouting objectives. They have enough of a sense of timing and proportion to judge whether the project is feasible-and what it would take. With practice, good scouts see (or research) the subtler physical qualities. Weather and lighting, useful symbols of "the other side", traffic and security patterns would fall into this category. Artistically, experienced scouts (and action coordinators) can look at the site and almost see the action unfolding. They anticipate the reactions of other participants in the action. These include bystanders, workers, the curious, police, and media people. They have a sense of the timing and flow of the action. The artistic side of the scout can see the symbolic quality of the action and the action site as a political performance space-with an edge. For most of us its a lot easier to become a great mechanic than a great artist. So most of what Ruckus focuses on in this section is the practice of scouting. There is a method to it which we can learn from each other. Developing scouting abilities depends on a lively discussion of technique and results. One note: for the purposes of this section we'll focus on the skills to do a fairly complex scout. Activists can scale down to an appropriate level.

Preparing for the Scout

Before you can prepare for the scout it is prudent to revisit some of your assumptions regarding the action. Is the potential action appropriate to the campaign at this particular time? Is it proportionate to the seriousness of the issue? Will the action speak to the problem? Will it be visible and understandable to its target audience? It is likely we will have to ask ourselves these questions several times during the scouting process.

Good scouting usually begins with good research. Good background research can reveal difficult-to-see potential. It even helps get us in the right frame of mind. Often, your potential action site is far away and you don't want to make repeated trips. So if you haven't been to the potential action site try to visualize it. What have you heard about it? What do you know about similar sites or facilities? Do any of your colleagues have experience useful to your project? A good bit of scouting is, in effect, brainstorming about "what-if. " Ask yourself what will enhance this creative process. We find scouting is often most effective - and usually more fun - when done by a group. Who should be on the scouting team? Sometimes the team can be enhanced by friends who might not even be activists. Artists or photographers, for instance.

Scouting From A to Z: What Should I Bring?

- **Addresses.** Not just of the place you are scouting but maybe your lawyer as well. I make it a habit of writing address and contact numbers on my forearm in indelible ink before a scout or action.

- **Aerial Photos.** There are many sources of aerial photos. One of the best is the EROS Data Center in Sioux Falls, SD. This is a US Government source. Besides high-level aerial photos they also provide LandSat imagery in a variety of formats.

- **Aeronautical Charts.** Another useful form of mapping. Aeronautical charts, besides being useful for navigation, can also provide additional detail not seen on topographic maps particularly in remote regions. Aeronauticals are updated much more frequently than topographics.

- **Baby Wipes.** Those lanolin soaked towels can be just the thing to get some of that industrial grime off until you can get to a proper wash-up. Saves your water for drinking and it's nice to have clean hands for eating.

- **Baseball Cap.** A baseball cap can be more useful than you first think. In brushy country it can help keep stuff out of your eyes. They are also particularly useful at night when you can use the brim of the cap to screen out unwanted light allowing you to peer into those dark areas with more effectiveness.

- **Bear Mace.** Avoid guard dogs as a rule. Sometimes you just don't know if one is around however. And you could sustain a nasty injury if surprised. Bear mace can help, but be aware someone might think it is a weapon.

- **Boat Kit.** If you're going out on the water make sure your vessel has the basic emergency and repair items. Everyone should have a life preserver.

- **Binoculars.** Often very useful, I consider them part of the basic scouting kit. Binoculars are described by two numbers, 8 x 35, for example. The first number is the magnification and the second is the width of the field of view. For land-use magnifications of 8 to 10 times are good. On the water, where its hard to keep the binoculars stable, a seven power magnification is often used. Top line binoculars, such as Steiners, may have a built-in compass and reticule (an etched scale useful in estimating heights and distances).

- **Boots or hip-waders.** Keep those doggies dry! And sometimes the wettest way in is the path of least attention.

- **Bug repellent.** When you want to sit still, you don't want to be swatting mosquitoes. A bit of bug repellent can make those long stakeouts a little more tolerable.

- **Camera, with correct lenses.** An essential tool for most scouts. A picture can be worth a thousand words. In some cases the camera catches detail that the eye misses. It helps you remember detail. Take lots of photos. If necessary, do a sketch map of the different shots and angles. A 50mm lens together with a zoom is a good basic kit. Make sure you have extra batteries for the camera.

- **Carpeting.** Nothing like a good old 3 x 5 foot square of carpet thrown over the barbwire to make your fence crossing a little less difficult. Fuzzy side towards the barbs for better grip.

- **Celestron.** Celestron is a good, affordable, high-magnification telescope. It provides greater viewing ability than spotting scopes and can be fitted with camera or video camcorder mounts.

- **City Maps.** Especially if you're scouting in an unfamilary city. It will help you in planning the action.

- **Coastal Pilot.** A coastal pilot is an accompaniment to nautical charts and is an excellent source when scouting marine or harbor actions. A coastal pilot gives harbor regulations, layout, and procedures. It tells what frequencies shipping and harbor pilots use. A coastal pilot also provides weather summaries.

- **Communications gear.** You may want to have gear to communicate with other team members or lookouts. If the action you are planning requires the use of communication gear you need to test it on-site as part of the scout. Interference from electrical equipment, distances that are too great for the equipment, and other users on your channel are more common than you think. Scout electronically as well as physically!

- **Compass.** As an accompaniment to your map. Look for a good liquid-filled model. (The needle settles quicker). A sighting compass is the most useful.

- **Coveralls.** Scouting can be a dirty, even toxic, activity. A good set of coveralls can help keep your better clothes clean. And if you are spotted while scouting ditching your coveralls can give you a new look quickly. In some cases, coveralls can be used as a disguise. Workers might not get the attention idle individuals get.

- **Digital Cameras.** Although they don't yet have the range of lens choice that conventional cameras enjoy, digitals have some useful features. One is no developing time-the images are available for instantaneous use. An the imagery can be sent via modem to co-conspirators.

- **Doggie treats.** Sometimes you encounter a dog who is not really a guard dog-just noisy. A big fat doggie treat sometimes will convince them to quiet down.

- **Doubler.** A quick and dirty method of getting more out of your camera lenses. A doubler does just that: it doubles the magnification of your lenses and is a cheaper alternative to buying another long lens.

- **Duct Tape.** No explanation needed. I keep some wrapped on my water bottle.

- **Dry Bags.** Originally invented by river rafters, these bags are made out of neoprene or rubberized ballistics cloth. They roll up at the neck and-when in good repair-are virtually submersible. They come in a number of sizes and styles. Some even have detachable backpack straps.

- **Electronic measuring tapes.** Sometimes it is just too damn obvious when you pull out that honkin' hundred foot tape and begin measuring the senator's office. The solution is an infrared tape measure-they don't cost that much and are very unobtrusive. Point and push the button.

- **En-route Maps and Directions.** Usually when scouting you want to spend the minimum time needed to get the job done. Waiting for the other car or party to show up increases your chance of detection. Little things, like complete en-route maps and directions, can mean a lot.

- **Facility Blueprints.** Usually part of your background research, sometimes having a good set of blueprints can help you make sense out of a complicated industrial site or sprawling train yard, for example. Most cities require these to be filed with some entity of government-it varies from place to place. Most municipalities consider these to be public documents.

- **Film and filters.** Think about the photographic conditions for your scout and what you want to get out of the photos. Color film is almost universally preferred. Slides take longer to process but often are less grainy than color print film. Also, using a projector you can enlarge the image more easily than with print film. In extreme low-light conditions infrared film has been used. (It can be used with a normal camera). Polarizing or skylight filters can cut haze and help capture detail, especially in bright light, as well as help to protect the lens.

- **First Aid kit.** If there is a substantial chance someone might get hurt, carry a minimal first aid kit containing bandages and antibacterial cream.

- **Foam Pad.** Closed-cell foam, such as ensolite, can make those long waits a bit more comfortable. You don't need enough to lie on-just a 18" x 30" piece to sit on and lean against.

- **FM (49 MHz) Headsets.** These cheap, two way radios are so limited in range they are almost useless in scouting or action situations. One place where I have used them with success is for quiet communications between scouting team members. In 1989, we infiltrated an action team, video team and photographer to the heart of an AlCan aluminum smelter in Canada - coordinating the movement with FM headsets. Most of these units have hands-free, voice-activated microphones (VOX). In cold weather condensation from breathing has caused them to fail.

- **Frequency Counter.** This small electronic device digitally reads out strong, nearby radio frequencies in use. Consider their limited use in urban areas due to the enormous "radio clutter." But even in urban areas they can be useful right at the scene of activity-especially if you can see the other side operating their radios. In the forests, where there is very little radio usage, frequency counters have been used as early warning systems by activists entering closed areas. If someone was hunting for them they'd most likely be coordinating by radio.

- **Frequency Guides.** Used in conjunction with a scanner, these commonly available guides do a pretty good job of showing what frequencies the other side is using. Police Call by Radio Shack is a popular choice. Program the frequencies into your scanner and listen for traffic. If it doesn't seem like you're hearing what you should, other methods will have to be employed. The Electronics manual and workshop will offer more information on this subject.

- **Gloves.** Your hands can take an enormous beating while scouting. Good leather gloves can be worth their weight in gold. Basic equipment for scouting industrial sites and a must for crossing barbed or razor wire.

- **Global Positioning System (GPS) Receivers.** GPS has come way down in cost in recent years making it fairly affordable for activists. GPS makes back-country navigation all the easier-especially when operating off-trail. It's also useful when checking timber sale boundaries or when logging endangered species locations. With GPS the more you pay, the greater the accuracy. Costs on this technology is coming down fast.

- **Hardhat and Clipboard.** One of the universal disguises. It's amazing how people will notice, then tune out certain "normal" scenes. Hardhat and clipboard, coveralls or generic uniforms all seem to have this effect.

- **Headlamp with extra batteries.** Hand-held flashlights can be frustrating, even dangerous, to use. A headlamp is a much better choice. On the upper end I look for a focusable beam with a battery pack that you where inside your clothing as some batteries lose 40% of their power in cold weather. Also, try to avoid those that require strange batteries.

- **Identification.** Whether to carry identification on a scout has been endlessly debated. Here's the Ruckus rule of thumb: If you get caught and you probably can talk your way out, you don't need i.d. If the cops or company security become involved, you probably will need identification. They tend not to release you until they are satisfied they know who you are.

- **Light Meter.** Light meters sometime come in handy for those real early morning actions. When is it light enough?

- **Measuring tape.** How big is the pipe? How wide is the gate? The steel tape 25 foot model works well.

- **Money.** Each person in the scout team should carry a little in case they get separated or picked up.

- **Nautical Charts.** Good for not only what's on or in the water, but also what borders the water.

- **Night Vision Equipment.** Like other consumer electronics these devices have come down in price in recent years. There are two basic types: light amplification and infrared models. The first uses the available light-even starlight. The second type uses an infrared source to "light up" the object or scene and then this reflected light is read by the viewer. Some models can be mounted with cameras or video.

- **Notepad with pencils or pens.** You can also purchase waterproof paper and pens for inclement field work.

- **Pager.** Some activists have had success using pagers as a device to warn or communicate with an on-site scouting team.

- **Pedometer.** A device that tells you how far you have walked.

- **Pelican Case.** Similar to a dry bag, these waterproof plastic boxes are a good solution when dry and impact resistance is needed. Many cases have customizable

foam inserts. Also a good choice for protecting sensitive electronic or camera gear in poor conditions.

- **Plastic Bags.** Ziplocks to keep all those little things that need to stay dry, dry.
- **Proper Clothing.** Many a scout has been cut prematurely short by wet or frozen activists. Conditions can change, be ready.
- **Raingear.** The theory goes that rain gear is actually rain prevention gear. If you have it with you it keeps the rain away. The opposite also seems to be true.
- **Rake or Hoe.** Sometimes the easiest way past a fence is to go under rather than over it. With a rake or hoe you can lay on your belly and clear a little slither room. Particularly good if going over the fence would be too visible.
- **Scanner Radio.** A good electronic scout is often a necessary part of an overall scout. Scanners come in handheld and tabletop models. They are easy to use and often provide a world of useful information. The electronics manual will provide more detail on their use.
- **Spotting Scope.** Monocular or binocular, these have higher magnifications than ordinary binoculars. Because of the need to keep the wiggle down at higher magnifications spotting scopes are frequently mounted on small tripods. Hunters and birdwatchers often use them.
- **Survival Gear.** If you're out in the backcountry make sure you have at least minimal survival gear. A broken ankle five miles in can literally become a life-threatening experience. It might be a consideration to have someone with first aid experience on your scouting team.
- **Toxic Detection and Protection Gear.** In this day and age there is no reason why activists need to expose themselves to hazardous materials. Get good advice on what you might find and have the means to detect it and protect yourself. Industrial supply catalogs are good sources for this equipment and information. Many of the larger outfits have help lines for phone inquiries.
- **Tape Recorder.** If quiet isn't a requirement speaking your notes into a tape recorder is a good, fast way to get a lot of data. The small Radio Shack models with voice-operated (VOX) microphones are good.
- **Transistor Radio.** Another way to pass time on those long stakeouts.
- **Video Camcorder.** These can be extremely useful scouting tools and are becoming increasingly popular. One great thing about videocorders is you can record spoken notes right on the tape. They often work in lower light than

cameras, although they lack the high magnification long camera lenses afford. Have extra batteries too.

- **Watch.** Another part of the basic scouting tool kit. Time is relative to your adrenaline level: measure, don't estimate. If it has a stopwatch, timer, and alarm all the better.

- **Weather Information.** Get a weather forecast before each scout.

Scouting Intermodal Freight Facilities (IFF's)

Think of containerized shipping as consisting of mode and node. The mode is the method of transport-ship, rail, or truck. The node is where the containers are transferred from one transport mode to another. IFFs can be difficult to scout-you probably will have to go back several times during the course of planning the action. Your first scout or two will be general scouts-layout, distances, etc. Even though your initial scouts are general always keep an eye out for a good action. You never know when you're going to see something special.

IFF Scouting Tips

It pays to bring a good map of the area. The distances, security, and water all hamper good access. Often one must go to many different vantage points and assemble the overall picture piece by piece. Your map-backed up by sketch maps and photos-will greatly assist the process. Here are the type of questions your general scout should answer: Begin by locating the principal transportation pathways. Notice the traffic patterns. In ports, you will see mostly containers arriving or leaving by ship. They are loaded or unloaded from trucks or railcars. Very little of the containers will be transferred between rail and truck. Where are the rail lines, ship berths, and roads? Are the points of entry for each of these gated and/or guarded? Notice whether private vehicles are permitted in the area. Locate the container storage and staging areas. Where are the container handling vehicles stored?

Container Cranes

Pay attention to the ship unloading cranes as these are often the target of direct action. Are they fixed in position or on railroad tracks? Are they stored in a particular location

when not in use? There are two basic types of container cranes: ones with arms fixed horizontally, these often are rail-mounted, or ones whose arms fold to allow overheight ships to pass below, these usually are rail-mounted but can be fixed. When scouting a crane take lots of photos, particularly of the access ladders. If the crane is folded up, is there a deck-mounted ladder that would ease access to the end of the arm?

Rail Facilities

As mentioned above, the containers most often are removed from the ship and transferred to rail cars. These rail cars are also very vulnerable to direct action. Pay attention to the layout of the small freight yard that services the dock area. In general, freight yards have 4 major areas:

- The inbound yard, where loaded or unloaded freight cars arrive. This is where trains are "broken up."
- The outbound yard, loaded or unloaded waiting to leave. This is where trains are "assembled."
- Storage tracks, where unused cars are stored or juggled.
- Maintenance and power storage areas. The yard engines stay here while not in use.

Chaining oneself to the ends of the trains, to the tracks, or to switches all can seriously disrupt freight operations. An important note of caution regarding train actions: it is essential you control BOTH ends of any train you are doing an action on, even if the end is out of sight!

Road And Truck Access

In general, controlling road and truck access is more difficult than rail actions in that there is usually many more points of access or routing. Still this important aspect of container facility operation should not be automatically dismissed. How many gates do the trucks normally enter through? Are they guarded? Are the ships loading directly onto the trucks? If so, is there a particular location for this? Are the trucks being loaded from storage by container handling equipment? Any of these operations may be vulnerable to direct action.

Security

Depending on the location, cargo, company policy, or local conditions security can range from good to none. Rarely will a container facility's security be described as airtight, they are simply too wide-open to cover effectively. Nevertheless, an assessment of the security is an essential part of any scout.

First, notice whether there is security at the facility, often there is not. Is it private security or Port police? Often there is a larger lag time in reaction, if it is a private security force. If you see private security people, are they there for gate control, patrolling, or both? Do they use marked or unmarked cars for their patrols? Are they radio-equipped? Look for where the guards hang out while not patrolling. Do they eat on or off-site? If on-site is there a particular building where they eat? Does a lunch wagon come at a certain time each day? Are the guards in uniform? Are they armed? Do they carry mace, clubs, handcuffs, etc.? In general the more heavily equipped the more vigilant guards tend to be. Do they have time-clock boxes that they must insert a key into at various points on their rounds? Do the guards carry radios?
Another important element of security scouting is alarms and video monitors. In general, alarms are used to prevent access to buildings and, less frequently, to cranes. They are rarely used for perimeter or outdoor security since video monitors are more useful. There are two basic types of infra-red alarms: using one or two monitors. The two-monitor type have a transmitter and if you interrupt the beam, the alarm will sound. These units are usually around waist-high, particularly when outside, so animals won't set them off. The second type of monitor is the "motion detector" style, similar to what you see at supermarket front doors. It is usually a single unit covering a fan-shaped area. They are extremely effective for indoor security. My advice is: if you're inside and see one it has probably already seen you. Video surveillance cameras can be fixed or moveable. The moveable ones can automatically sweep over a preset arc (notice the time of sweep) or pan by remote control. If you can't avoid a video camera, you can often harmlessly disable it with spray starch. Here's how its done: tape the can of spray starch to the end of a pole of sufficient reach. Take a strap hinge and tape one leg alongside the can. The other leg should cross over the spray button, make sure it's all facing the right direction. Tie a string to the end of the crossover leg and run it down the length of the pole. Aim the can and pull the string. Long-distance starch painting, voila!

Electronic Scouting

We discussed the advantages of using a scanner to listen to port operations regarding the ship's arrival-the scanner is also very useful in scouting the shoreside facility. As with the marine operations, the goal is to assemble a list of frequencies that will be useful before or during the action. Examples of these could be the security, fire, police, port police, news bureaus, and/or private contractors servicing the facility. Using the scanner before

the action helps one understand the cargo operations and security arrangements. Using a scanner during the action gives you information that will help you anticipate moves by the other side.

There are six principal ways to assemble the list of useful frequencies: frequency guides, FCC database searches, BBS inquiries, spectrum analysis, frequency counters, or your own scanning.

- **Frequency guides**

  There are a number of commercially available frequency guides on the market today. Radio Shack's Police Call is probably the most well-known. In addition, a number of specialized guides, such as US Government frequencies, are also available. The use of these handbooks is fairly straightforward: the tables are arranged by location. First look up the location, then look up the particular entities you are interested in.

- **FCC database searches**

  Often the scanner guides are not complete or completely up to date. A more sophisticated approach to the search is to use commercially available software to access the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) frequency database. This database contains the records of all FCC licensed transmitters. You can search by location, license-holder, company name, area, etc. In general, it is too costly and difficult to get into FCC database searching for just one action. I would suggest looking for another organizaiton that may already have the software.

- **BBS Inquiries**

  As the popularity of scanning has increased, a number of computer bulletin boards (BBS) have arisen dedicated to this activity. One such BBS is Scancom at 904-878-4413. In general, this is a roundabout way to search for frequencies but it could pay off for some difficult problems. A BBS member might have the frequencies you are looking for and putting up an information request is pretty easy. ScanCom also could recommend a BBS more local to your area.

- **Spectrum Analysis**

  A spectrum analyzer is a device which reads and video-displays the broadcast spectrum. SAs are sophisticated devices-usually costing around $2000 that take a trained operator to use. They are, however, incredibly accurate. You see everything: licensed, unlicensed, listed, unlisted-even "secret" government

frequencies. Again, it's best to hook up with someone who is already set up for this kind of searching.

- **Frequency Counters**

  These are rather simple devices which, when turned on, read out the frequency of the strongest signal it receives. In general, these units are of little value except in one circumstance: if you were in close proximity to, say, the guard as he keyed his radio. His transmit frequency would show up on your frequency counter. Counters generally cost around $200. Opto-Electronics used to make a serviceable model.

- **Scanning**

  One of the easiest, although tedious, methods of getting the other sides frequency is by doing "limit searches" using your own scanner. In a limit scan, the searcher sets a high and low frequency and the scanner cycles between them (at predetermined increments). Commercial, public safety, and military all have specific bands assigned. The scanner guides will help you identify them. A helpful shortcut, if your target is, for example, the guards at a specific port facility is to look closely at the size and shape of the antennas. By matching them up with the pictures in the scanner guide you can figure out which band you need to scan.

Scouting Timber Ship Actions

Overview

There are several basic types of ship actions: directed against military, civilian, commercial, or private vessels; actions upon arrival or departure; and actions against the cargo, crew, or the vessel itself. These distinctions are more than theoretical, each situation requires specific research and preparation. For the purposes of this guide we will focus on an action against inbound timber vessels or those which have arrived and are attempting to off-load cargo.

The Timber Trade And Vessel Identification

Before being able to identify the target vessel one must have a reasonably accurate picture of the timber trade in general. Tropical timber products (TTPs) come in many forms: as raw logs, sawn lumber, veneers, and finished products such as furniture, knick-knacks, or chopsticks. TTPs are mostly transported by ship due to their weight and because the shipments are generally not time-sensitive. The shipments take two forms: as

bulk cargo or in containers. Raw logs and sawn lumber can be bulk-shipped, all else is containerized to protect from damage. From previous research (1990-96) we've found the vast majority of TTPs entering the US is containerized. We apparently found some bulk shipped products coming into East Coast ports. The small amount of bulk imports are probably going to East Coast veneer mills or small manufacturing plants. We've found no bulk imports entering West Coast ports (1991). Given the geographical requirements of the action we can assume that the targeted imports will be containerized.

Containerized Shipping

An ever-increasing proportion of freight shipped today is containerized. Once the container is packed and sealed, it can be carried by rail, truck, or ship-hence the name "intermodal shipping container" (ISCs). There are a number of advantages to ISCs. The containers can be filled at numerous, decentralized locations. They can be transported to collection points by any of the three "modes." Once the containers arrive at the centralization points their uniformity allows ease of handling, loading, and unloading. Most importantly, this ease of handling greatly reduces labor costs. Containers range from 15 to 40 feet and can handle loads up to 30 tons. They are stackable up to nine or ten high, using small interlocks on each of the corners. There are always markings on the outside of the container, listing the owner, operating agent, and physical specifications of the container. Occasionally a small paper invoice will be tucked into the handle area but this is rare, and most often seen on rail carried containers. In general, there are no markings outside that will identify the contents. Some modern container facilities have begun using a laser-scanned color bar code system similar to what is found on grocery packaging. These bar codes are on the side of the container on a patch approximately 12 x 24 inches. Instead of the simple black and white bars of grocery packaging these patches are multicolored. If an activist wanted to apply pressure to the shipping company, one possible way would be to use colored electrical tape to alter these bar codes-disrupting the automated tracking and inventory systems. Even the threat of this might feel substantial since these alterations could be performed anywhere on the containers journey. There is a wide variety of container handling equipment in use, but all work by one of two methods. Either the machine lifts the container from underneath or it locks into the stacking/handling fixtures on the top corners and lifts from above. In general, the lift from below equipment resembles a large forklift (and is generally smaller) while the lift from above equipment can resemble either a marine travellift (a table with each leg having a wheel) or a crane. The crane lifts are of particular interest to action aficionados due to their vulnerability to direct action. Containerized cargo also presents a couple challenges in an action context. A major problem is the "anonymity" of the cargo. Given that a ship will often be loaded with hundreds of virtually identical containers carrying a variety of products, it's virtually impossible to determine which, if any, have the targeted imports. Credible deniability by the shipper could put egg on a campaigner's face. Another concern of lesser importance is the charge that the stuff may be aboard but

you're affecting a lot of innocent people by the action. A positive and well thought out response should be ready.

Developing The Action/strategic Research Tools

We know that TTPs come into a large number of ports, seldom on fixed schedules, on a wide variety of vessels, and are often handled by different shoreside agents and shippers. In order to develop the action, begin with the knowns. Factors such as costs, media concerns, legal liabilities, location of people or material resources will narrow the possibilities. P.I.E.R.S (Port Import Export Research Service) is a very valuable tool in the search for timber imports. Working off US Customs Service manifests, PIERS develops an historical picture of the import/export trade. Port of entry or departure, commodity name, agent, shipper, vessel name and quantities are all included in these profiles. When using this service it's important to note that the information has several limitations. The information is never completely current. In general, there is a 4-6 week lag in processing export information while import info lags 1-2 weeks. Another limitation using PIERS is the expense. Subscribers are not charged by the "search" but for the number of "records" each search turns up. In order to limit the breadth of the inquiry the user develops "keywords" as search criteria. Typical keywords are the port name, product name or, if pertinent, the name of the shipper, vessel, or agent. Because of these reasons the optimum way to do a search is to team up someone who has expert knowledge of the timber trade with a PIERS operator who has a good knowledge of what keywords will effectively narrow the request. In one infamous incident a marine mammal researcher (using a different system) asked for all articles in the past six months on dolphins. Unfortunately, the Miami Dolphins had just won the Super Bowl-this request cost hundreds of dollars. Take care developing your keywords.

Using Piers Data: Patterns And Cross-referencing

The first thing to do with your PIERS search is to look for any apparent patterns. Is there one ship that seems to always be carrying TTPs? Is one agent or shipper handling the business? Do the ships always seem to be going to one port facility? Most often one needs to cross-reference the PIERS data with information from other sources. This cross referencing is where the real detective work of developing the action comes in. Sometimes this work can be difficult and the results elusive. It's important that one proceeds methodically in the investigation. Keep detailed notes as a piece of information that now seems insignificant may be the key later. Here are some other sources of information that are often useful:

- **Journal Of Commerce**

  The JoC is a national business daily focusing on trade. It contains lots of information generally useful to activists. The portion of the JoC that is

particularly useful in terms of ship actions is towards the back of the paper in a section called "shipcards." The shipcards list the arrival and departure times of all regularly scheduled shipping, as well as listing the ports of call for the vessel. The shipcards are particularly useful in cross-referencing PIERS data. Unfortunately, the JoC subscription is over $200/yr, but most major public libraries carry it.

- **Marine Exchanges**

  Most major ports have what's called a "Marine Exchange" (ME). These are quasi-governmental non-profit organizations offering a range of services to ships, companies, and individuals involved in the shipping business. Most MEs offer a range of office services as well as historical records and an "intelligence network.". An important service of the ME is to offer daily mailouts or faxes giving vessel arrival and departure times. This information is generally up-to-date accurate, more so than the shipcards. Quoting from the Puget Sound Marine Exchange handout: "The services described...provide a constant flow on information through the Marine Exchange from its membership. This information is augmented by periodicals, other marine exchanges, other industry workers, and various sources to allow the Marine Exchange to present a unique, very accurate picture of vessel and port activity...". The following ports offer ME services (1990 survey): Boston, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Hampton Roads (Chesepeake Bay), New Orleans, Western Gulf of Mexico, Los Angeles\Long Beach, San Francisco Bay Region, Portland Puget Sound (All Washington State waters). Typical membership rates are $45/month for mailouts or $75/month for fax service. If you wish to subscribe, a good cover is to describe yourself as a cargo brokerage consultant.

- **Seadata**

  SeaData is another subscription information service offering vessel profiles. A typical profile will physically describe the ship: draft, length, tonnage, speed, etc. The owner, lessor, agents, and operators are often provided. A particular interest: SeaData often can re-create the last couple months of a ship's schedule-offering some predictability. SeaData is very expensive, about $3,500/year. The cost of individual profiles are quite modest, less than $10 each. If one wanted a SeaData profile go through another group who already has a subscription.

- **Lloyd's Tracker Service**

  An offshoot of the Lloyd's Insurance, LTS will tell you where a particular ship is anywhere in the world usually on the same day as the request is made. The cost is approximately $200/search.

Developing The Action / Tactical Tools

The various research tools described above are used to identify the port of entry and target vessel of the action. Further research is usually needed before effective scouting can begin. Here is a list of other good sources of information useful in planning ship actions.

NOAA Coast Pilots

NOAA Coast Pilots are books meant to be used in conjunction with nautical charts. They are published by the US Government and are available wherever charts are sold. Here are some of the useful things you can learn from the pilot. (We'll use Coast Pilot #7 (US West Coast) and Los Angeles as an example.) Chapter 1, pg 23. A list of the VHF-FM radio frequency allocations. Chapter 2, pg 32-33. Location and description of ship anchorages in Los Angeles and Long Beach. Chapter 2, pg 76. Pilotage regulations for Los Angeles. Chapter 2, pg 104-107. A general description of the weather on the West Coast. Chapter 4, pg 117-126. Detailed descriptions of the layout and operation of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and San Pedro harbors. Appendix, pg T-1. Detailed weather information for Los Angeles.

Harbor Pilots, Harbor Tugs, And Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

These three services are most useful immediately before the action. An inbound ship must call for a harbor pilot, often giving up to 8 hours notice of arrival. The pilot goes aboard the ship at a place outside the harbor called the precautionary area. If one is listening with a vhf radio or scanner you will often hear the "pilot call." Some activists have simply called the pilot service by phone and asked when the "pilot for vessel _____ was called for." Details about the pilotage requirements and radio working frequencies are found in the Coast Pilot. Once a ship enters the breakwater tugs are often necessary (or required by statute) to get the vessel into its berth. Like the pilot call radio conversations between the tug and ship will signal immediate arrival. Most large harbors have what's called Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). These services monitor the movements of all shipping from the precautionary area in. In some harbors, reporting to VTS is voluntary, in others it's mandatory. Large ships always report in. Again, by listening to your scanner, VTS will provide refined, short-term info about your target vessel's movement.

Communications

Large ships use three principal methods of communication: HF or MF radio, SATCOM, and VHF-FM radio. HF and MF radios are also called "ham radios" although the commercial frequency allocation is different from the amateur bands. These radios can have ranges of several thousand miles but have several drawbacks that are making them used less by large shipping. SATCOM (Satellite Communication) is what's replacing HF radio. These systems look and operate like a regular telephone utilizing a geostationary satellite for a relay. SatCom costs about $12/minute and intercepting these communications is usually beyond the ability of most activists. Some activists, (having gotten the SatCom number of the target ship from SeaData or from the SatCom directory) have simply phoned up

the radio operator and asked their ETA. VHF-FM radio is the principal short-distance means of communication for ships. Range is determined by the height of the antenna above the water but 40-70 miles for large ships is not uncommon. All ships are required to constantly monitor channel 16 (the International hailing and distress frequency) and most, also monitor a second, "working" frequency. In most harbors, the ship will monitor 16, the VTS frequency, and the pilot frequency (usually channel 12 or 13.). Again, consult the Coast Pilot for more details.

The Ruckus Scouting Manual

Ruckus Scouting Manual – Change History

4/13/2003 – Version 1.0. Converted HTML web content to Word format