



Burn Perimeter Briefing

Effigy & Temple (& Art / Sentinel Notes)

Welcome to the burn perimeter! Here are the things you need to know when standing the line. Remember the golden rules: have fun, be good to people, and stay safe out there.

Timeline

4.00pm	Meet at Ranger HQ for briefing
4.45pm	Walk to Rally Point
5.00pm	Take-up your designated position on perimeter
5.45pm	Structure is lit
7.00pm (Approx)	Reconvene at Rally Point once perimeter is dropped

Equipment and Prep

You are showing up to a major combustion event. A large structure will burn, parts of it might explode and you get a front row seat. Freakin' awesome! While there, you may be standing in the same place for up to two hours (or more!) A certain amount of equipment and preparation is required.

Equipment

Many of the items on this list are driven by a simple fact; fire sometimes falls from the sky upon you. Sparks, embers, burning chunks of wood, fire tornadoes and surges of heat can make it as far as the perimeter. Hilarity ensues.

A word on clothing: natural fibers are your friend. They singe while artificial fibers melt. Denim, wool and Ranger shirts are all good choices.

If you normally wear a complicated outfit that's hard to run in, consider going simple for a burn perimeter.

- Long sleeved shirt and wide brimmed hat
- Simple outfit that covers you. Layers are good
- Comfortable, insulating, protective footwear, like an old pair of boots
- Water bottle
- A good torch
- Jacket (optional, but highly recommended)
- Small food items (optional, but again recommended)

Preparation

We expect you to be on time at HQ for sign in, fully fed, rested and sober. Further, you want to make sure you are well hydrated, have taken care of any toilet needs and are generally ready to be standing in one place for a couple of hours around sundown without any support infrastructure or chance to head to the toilet.

You can't swing by your camp on this shift so bring snack food and warm layers.

Communication and Overall Structure

The Rangers organise a large burn perimeter (Effigy) by “quarters”. These are typically :

(1) 12 – 3, (2) 3 – 6, (3) 6 – 9, (4) 9 - 12

The quarters are centered around the main item to be burnt. Each quarter has a Quadrant Lead (usually with a radio) following the direction of the Burn Perimeter Lead.

For the Effigy Q4 may have a lower density due to the Rock forming a major natural barrier and being the location where the smoke (and embers) usually blow.

Temple is backed by a fence and thus is usually a single 180 degree hemisphere. It usually has one Burn Perimeter Lead only.

Smaller art burns whilst requiring a 360 degree perimeter usually have a single lead.

You will be assigned to a position by a Lead.

All communication goes through the Quadrant Lead or Perimeter Lead. If you have an event radio, you would be well advised to turn it down. Do not transmit on your radio, period. Your Leads will be feeding you information about the burn as they receive it. If you need their attention, turn on your torch and point it at them.

Crowd Control

Here we come to the heart of this thing. We're zen enough to know we can't control anyone, but we can encourage them to control themselves. To that end, we engage participants one at a time, as they come. Do that Ranger thing. Get to know them. Be a good host. Ask them to sit down and banter together. Don't order anyone around.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR POSITION. Do not wade into the crowd to deal with something, do not wander off from your position to talk to someone. Once you are set on the perimeter, stay there. If you need to leave the line for any reason, tell your Lead.

Goals

To help you build a safe perimeter, you have a number of concrete goals for your section:

- Get the crowd seated for at least 2 or 3 rows deep
- Keep tripping hazards out of the crowd
- Discourage idiocy like fighting and pushing
- Encourage things like joy, connection, awe and wonder
- No one without a hi-viz vest gets past the perimeter

You and Your Crowd

There are two reasons we want the crowd seated as far back as we can reasonably encourage, the first is that it makes it easier for people to see and it discourages jockeying for a better view, which creates disgruntlement. The second is that it helps stop runners.

Common tripping hazards include; bikes, chairs and tripods. Use your judgment, but in general we like to have these not in the first few rows. Bikes are the worst: get them 10 meters out if you can. If someone is reluctant to move one of these items and doesn't seem a good sport, get one of your Leads involved.

Photographers will be trying to set up tripods right on the perimeter. Most will be cool about it. Use your judgment. Small tripods that don't block the view of the crowd are fine.

The odds are high that someone will try to get in the perimeter without a hi-viz vest. They might brandish a media pass or have a great story full of names you might recognise. If they don't have a hi-viz or emergency services credentials, they aren't supposed to be in the perimeter, **period, full stop**. There aren't any exceptions to this. Attempt to stop anyone coming in, but do not lay hands on them. If someone absolutely bulls past you, flag down your lead or the nearest Sandman, who will be happy to discuss the matter with them.

Pro Tips for Dealing with Your Crowd

- You aren't a cop or paid security. Don't act like it. Social Capital is our currency
- Engage everyone near the front personally. Be warm and welcoming
- Ask for what you need from the crowd. Empower them to be part of the solution
- Maintain situational awareness while engaging your section. Don't get tunnel vision
- Explain to your first few rows that they are the perimeter, not the tape and cones. They are helping keep everyone behind them safe and happy
- Check in regularly with the Rangers next to you. Be brief and professional.

Runners

There is a small chance that someone may take it into their head to try to run into the fire. Your job is to try to stop this and your main tools are your crowd and social pressure. If everyone is seated close together, it is hard for a runner to get going.

If a runner does make a break for it, do not lay hands on them. There are lots of reasons for this. Don't do it. Instead we have a group of trained firefighters called Sandmen who will be between you and the fire and it is their job to abruptly discourage forward motion in runners. If a runner breaks, stay in place and spotlight them with your flashlight. Keep an eye out for copycats while your friendly Sandmen take care of the runner.

When the Burn Starts

At some point the structure will catch fire. Fire is pretty. Don't look at the fire; look at your crowd. Honestly, after you have seen a few burns, the sense of wonder and joy on the crowd's faces is far more interesting. More importantly, you have volunteered to keep them safe, not watch the burn. What you are watching for is runners or the crowd starting to surge forward.

Another thing we traditionally do as Rangers is to kneel on one knee as soon as the fire starts. This gives the crowd a good view and allows us to move rapidly. Don't sit all the way down, you might need to stand in a hurry.

The Best Laid Plans

Once in a while, things go sideways. The two main ones we need to worry about are the fire getting a bit rambunctious and the perimeter breaking.

It's common for wind or convection currents to blow the heat and some sparks from the fire toward a particular part of the perimeter. As far as the crowd goes, this is a self-correcting problem. People surge backwards away from the heat and sparks. Encourage them to move with caution and care. Maintain a calm composure and they will follow your lead. When the embers cool and the crowd flows back, remind them where the line is and invite them to sit. Do not re-establish the line farther away from the structure; it makes things needlessly complicated.

Another problem, which is unusual, is that the perimeter can break before it is actually dropped. If you have done a good job with your crowd, this is unlikely; they trust you when you tell them that you need their help to hold because of a medical or safety issue.

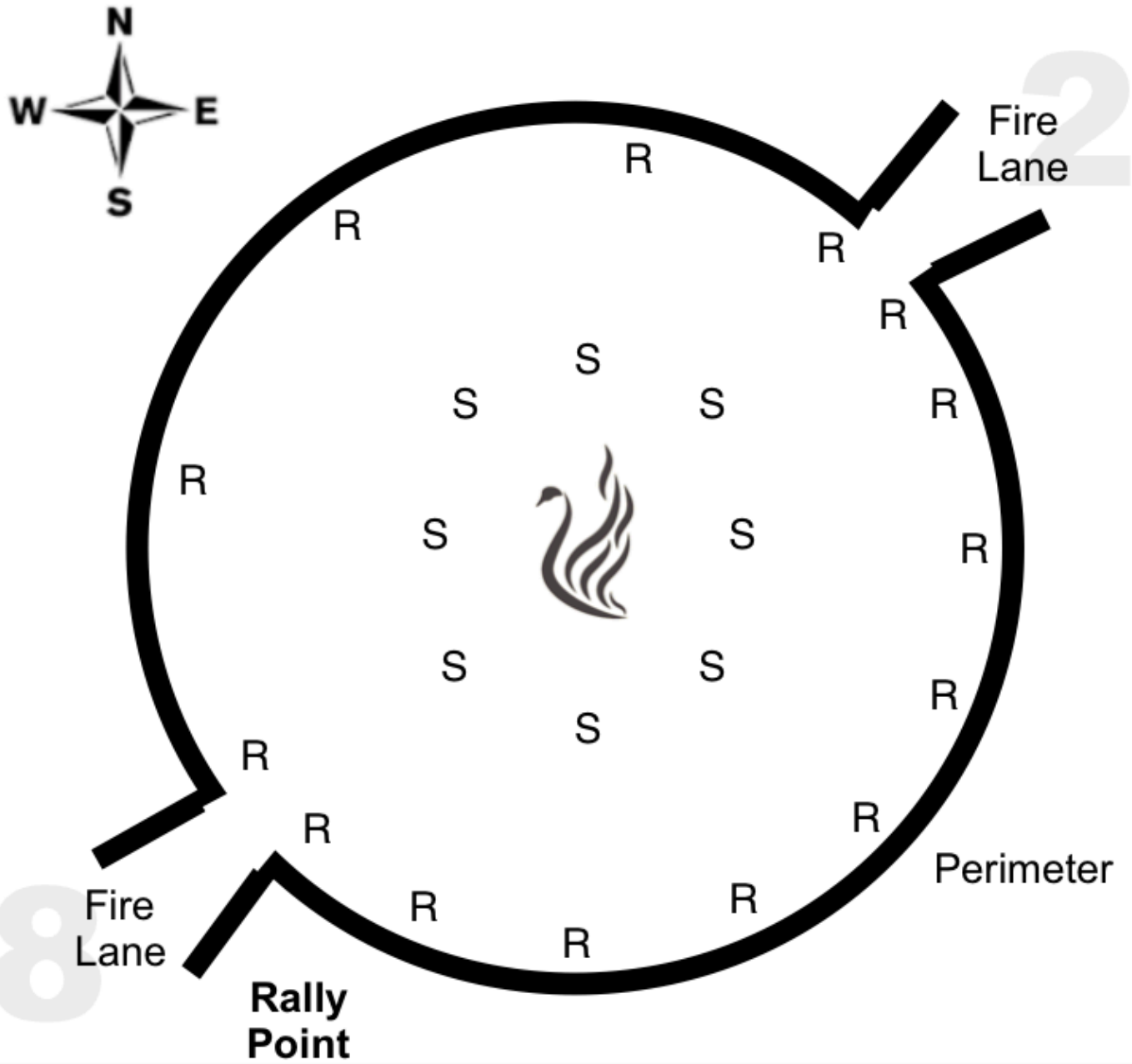
If it does break and your crowd surges toward the fire, don't try to stop them by standing in their way. Your safety is priority one, not getting trampled. Hold your section for as long as you can, then get out of the way and stay safe. If you can't see your fellow Rangers or Lead, head to your rally point. If you have an event radio that you have turned down for the burn, turn it back up and listen for any instructions.

All Good Things...

At some point, the Fire Chief will call perimeter drop. At that point, turn your radio up if you have it, stay out of the way of the crowd, and proceed immediately to the rally point (which will be established before the burn starts).

DO NOT SKIP GOING TO THE RALLY POINT. Hand-in your Hi-vis vest and enjoy the rest of your Burn night.

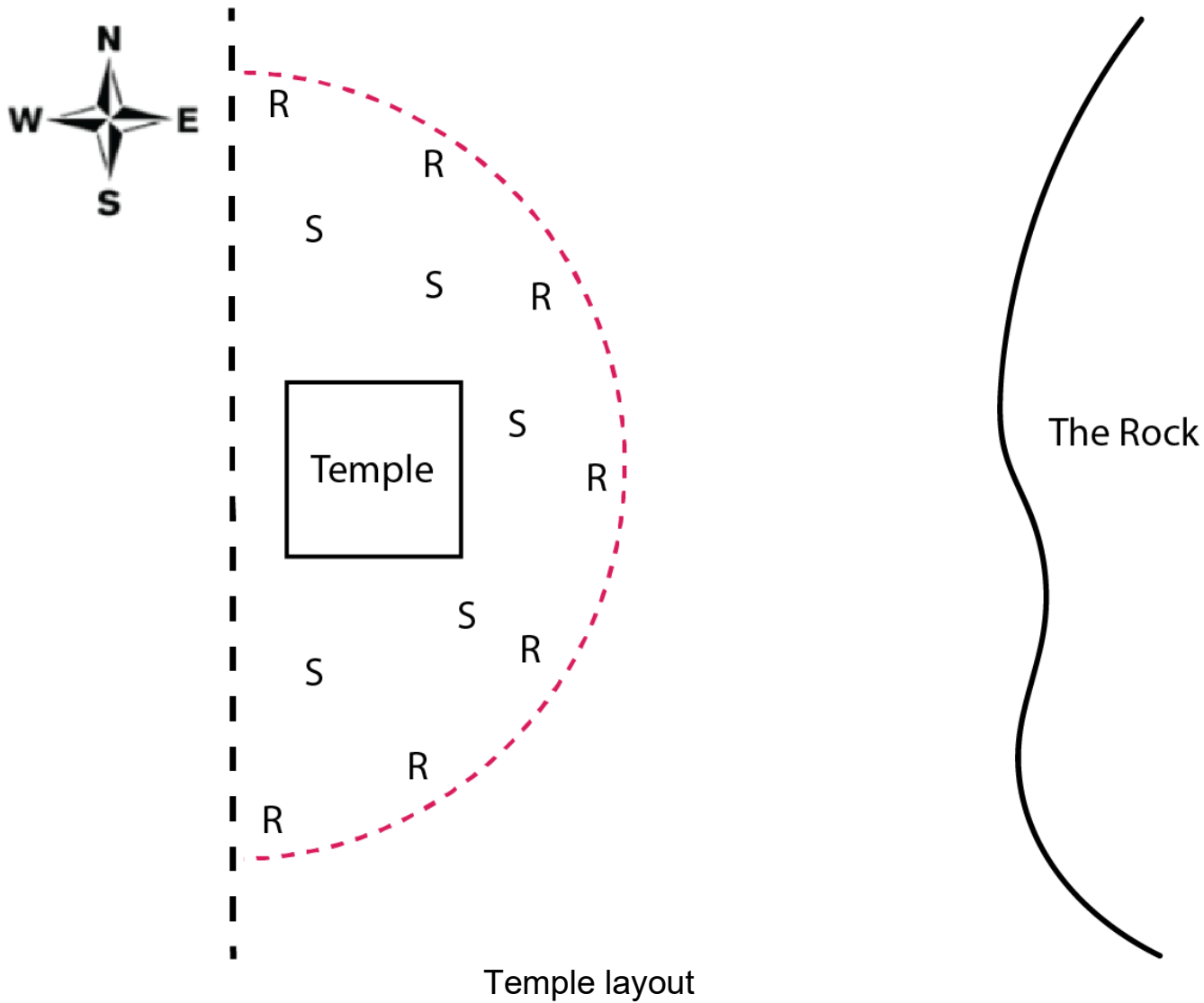
Thank you and good work, Ranger!



Effigy layout



Effigy View from the North East



Temple layout

History

v1.1 2024

v1.0 Circa 2016

Factotum – New images, rewrite, nomenclature

Pommie – Original version