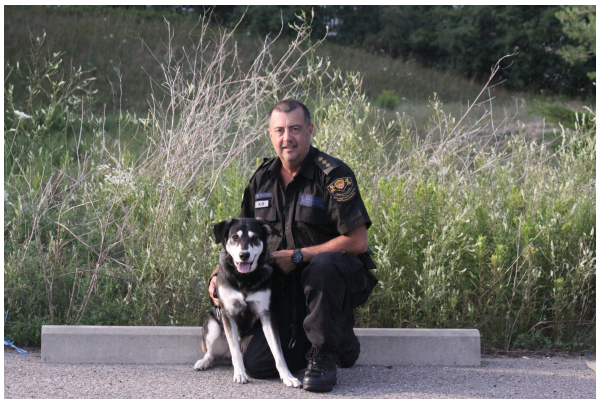
Advanced Tactical Training Search and Rescue

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Experience and certification of Captain William Bolton



In the 1970s, William was drafted into the Rhodesian army to serve in the capacity firstly as a soldier and in addition as a Paramedic.

Fully qualified as a soldier and in advanced tactical and anti-terrorist affairs, he would be posted on the frontline to respond to terrorist attacks and administer advanced medical treatment until the casualty could be evacuated to a medical facility. Often accompanying the casualty in both land and air evacuations.

After leaving the service in 1980, he moved to South Africa for a short stint before coming to reside in Canada, where he became a member of the Waterloo Regional Police Services (Reserves).

His role at first was patrol, but as time went on, he advanced to the training department, where he would be involved in the training of recruits and work alongside other training officers to establish training requirements.

Given his previous military experience, he was given greater privileges and training beyond that of others in his division.

He kept up his frontline experience by continuing on patrol with the traffic unit, allowing him to refine his skills in accident reconstruction and analysis. These are mimicked in other positions he held later in Search & Rescue, etc.

Throughout all of his time with the Police unit, he was also a certified CPR and First Aid instructor with the Red Cross for over 10 years.

After his 18 years in police service, William left to refine his skills more in canine and searches.

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Search & Rescue:

In 2013, he formed a volunteer search and rescue group in the region, as there was none.

Drawing on his military and police experience, he utilised international knowledge and sources to develop a training programme that would serve as a standard in conjunction with other similarly formed groups.

Having received a dog for searches, he went on numerous courses, including Obedience Level 1&2, tracking, air scent, and Human Remains Detection - ground and water.

Advancing his skills further, he started taking training courses on teaching and taught tracking and advanced levels regarding dog training.

To advance the group further, he introduced UAVs to the unit, being one of the few pilots to achieve his FAA-107 and Transport Canada certification, finally becoming a UAV examiner for Transport Canada.

He further introduced horses to the team, where they were used not only for elevation, etc., but these horses were trained to air scent as well. Although not an instructor in this area, he had a hands-on approach to the training.

To date, he has:

- Has been involved in as many as 23 searches in a year.
- Taught aviation, ground search and rescue courses and canine training.
- Worked with other groups nationwide and internationally on a smaller scale
- He is currently the Canadian Director for Community United Efforts (CUE).
- Has completed FEMA courses in Disaster relief, etc.
- Has established a Disaster Response team to be able to respond to small and large issues, merging with other response teams to be able to unify resources.
- Has been certified in Ground Penetrating Radar for human remains.
- Is a certified aviation radio examiner
- Hold the UAV examiner position with Transport Canada, testing potential pilots of UAVs at the advanced level.

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Disaster Relief:

In 2019, he started expanding further into Disaster Relief, as it seemed as if there was a higher need than before.

Creating a stand-alone disaster relief trailer with solar panels, water purification and other needs for isolated incidents.

William has added things, including a cell distribution system and satellite links, allowing for extended communications where possible for families needing to contact loved ones. Municipalities allow them to stay in contact with residents, enabling them to broadcast warnings and information.

It also allows emergency services to have a form of contact where needed.

Working with a local company, he has learned how to use disaster-related equipment to find live remains in many forms of burial.

This is ongoing and expands with needs every year.

Keeping his skill current, William has continued his experience in navigation and tracking with a compass and maps to advanced GPS technology, integrating both in his classes and real-world experience.

General interest:

Outside the search and rescue needs William has kept up with his side interests, including:

Working with dog rescue groups.
Becoming a Safety officer for the IDPA competition shooting
Kept an affiliation with emergency services contacts.

His education and training are kept current and constantly advancing his skills and knowledge to provide communities and families as needed.

He has implemented and created training standards with the growing needs of today, without forgetting the basics.

With a strong military, paramilitary and emergency service background, William has been able to keep ahead of the training required in this changing world, allowing consistency in services.