ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

RED STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 8

EO M221.08 – PREPARE AN INDIVIDUAL MEAL PACKAGE (IMP)

Total Time: 30 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-702/PG-001, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the Instructional Guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Immediately prior to this lesson bring water to a boil and have it waiting at a simmer. This water will be used to heat the IMP. Also, have some potable water boiled and ready for any additional food items in the IMP that require hot water.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TP1 and TP2 to introduce the cadets to meal preparation in the field and to generate interest.

Demonstration and performance was chosen for TP3 as it allows the instructor to explain and demonstrate how to prepare an IMP while providing an opportunity for the cadets to practice under supervision.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to prepare an IMP.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to know how to prepare the different components of an IMP. The IMP will provide energy to fuel the body enabling a cadet to continue tasks and activities in the field. The IMP is most often consumed during expeditions in the absence of kitchen facilities.

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Teaching point 1 **Discuss Field Meals**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Cadets may have some knowledge of the different types of rations available from Green Star or the General Training Course.

Provide the cadets with as many visual examples as possible. This lesson is conducted in the field, so fresh and IMP meals should be available. If hay boxes are available be sure to use them as an example.

TYPES OF FIELD MEALS

Eating regularly in the field is a very important aspect of maintaining strength and energy. Even though a cadet may be preoccupied, it is important to eat as much healthy food as possible when engaged in physical outdoor activities. Cold weather, strenuous exercise and constant activity require a lot of energy. Only a good, healthy meal can replace energy.

Fresh Rations

Fresh rations are raw food prepared in the field. Fresh rations require preparation and cooking. This type of ration usually does not store/keep well and must be cooked within a day of entering the field (e.g. hot dogs, hamburgers, steak, eggs, etc.).

Hay Boxes

Hay boxes contain fresh rations that have been prepared by a kitchen facility. The food is stored in insulated containers (hay boxes) that continue to keep this food warm without fuel (the warm metal inserts are kept warm because of the food stored within). A hay box is very similar to a thermos – keeping cold food cold or hot food hot.

Box Lunches

These meals are made as a replacement for meals that would normally be consumed at a kitchen. They may be used for planned trips where, either as a result of the timings or the route used, kitchen facilities are not accessible for meals. Box lunches usually contain sandwiches, fruit, veggies, juice, etc.

IMPs

Each IMP includes a main course (meat or vegetarian), vegetables and fruit in sealed foil pouches, and dried foods in paper/tinfoil pouches. All of the food items are safe to eat cold and dry—they may not taste as good as hot food, though. High sugar items like chocolate, hard candies, drink mixes, as well as coffee and tea are also included.

IMPs were developed to meet a typical day's three meal requirement. These meals are identified as breakfast, lunch and supper. They contain between 1400 and 1800 calories—enough calories for an adult performing strenuous tasks for prolonged periods. If inactive or working at lower levels of effort, eating IMPs could cause a person to gain weight.

WATER REQUIREMENTS

Bringing Water to the Field. When warming/heating IMPs, potable water is not required. Pond, lake or spring water that has not been filtered or treated will suffice.

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Water Used for Cooking IMPs Is Not Potable. The water used for cooking IMPs may become contaminated with aluminium oxide from the outside of the IMP pouches. This makes the water unsafe to drink and should be treated as grey (washing) water and disposed of appropriately.

Boiling or Treating Water From Unknown Sources. When drawing water from any source that may not be safe, it must be boiled rapidly for 5 minutes before it is consumed.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. What are the four types of rations available?

Q2. IMPs are identified by what type of meals?

Q3. Can water from boiled IMPs be consumed?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Fresh, box lunches, hay boxes and IMPs.

A2. Breakfast, lunch and supper.

A3. No. The water becomes contaminated with aluminium oxide from the outside of the IMP pouches.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss the Characteristics and Contents of an IMP**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture



During this TP, if available, have two IMPs. One breakfast meal and either a lunch or supper meal is best.

Describe the physical look of the IMP and discuss each item contained within. Give examples of how to use each item.

Show the difference in items between the breakfast and the other meals, note the cereal and hot chocolate items.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IMP

The IMP is a small-packaged meal that:

- is no bigger than a large dictionary;
- weighs 850 grams (14 ounces, one pound is equal to 16 ounces);
- contains approximately 1400 to 1800 calories;
- is available in three different meal types—breakfast, lunch and supper. Each type of meal has six different courses; and
- contains some similar contents.

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CONTENTS OF AN IMP

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	SUPPER
COMMON		1. Main meal pouch 2. Dessert pouch 3. Matches 4. Paper towel 5. Spoon 6. Beverage crystals	
MEAL-SPECIFIC	1. Coffee and hot chocolate with condiments 2. Cereal	1. Coffee and tea with condiments 2. Chocolate bar 3. Bread/crackers and jam	1. Coffee and tea with condiments 2. Chocolate bar or cookies 3. Soup 4. Side dish
Note: contents change yearly. This list is intended to identify the key items in an IMP.			

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. How heavy is an IMP?

Q2. What is the approximate size of an IMP?

Q3. Name five items that are common to each IMP.

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. About 850 grams or 14 ounces.

A2. No bigger than a large dictionary.

A3. Main meal pouch, dessert pouch, spoon, paper towel, and matches.

Teaching point 3 — **Explain, Demonstrate, and Allow Time for the Cadets, as a Group, to Prepare and Cook IMPs**

Time: 15 min — Method: Demonstration and Performance



Issue each cadet an IMP for their next meal. Demonstrate preparing an IMP for cooking and have cadets follow along.

Explain how to use each item in the IMP.

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COOKING IMPS

Although IMPs can be consumed cold, they should be heated when possible. Cooking IMPs is simply a matter of:

1. placing the foil pouch, with the entrée sealed inside, in boiling water;
2. heating for 5 minutes and then removing the pouch from the boiling water;
3. placing the pouch back into the cardboard package from which it came (tear a strip off the top of the package to allow easier access to the food); and
4. tearing open the foil pouch and enjoying.



IMPs require only a small amount of water to heat. The heat produced from boiling water and steam is very effective when heating the foil package.

Other food articles will have specific instructions, such as adding water, for their preparation.

Each IMP contains paper, cardboard and foil garbage. One way of reducing the amount of excess garbage that will have to be carried is to “break down” the rations before packing. This entails selecting only the food items that will be consumed and leaving behind the extra packaging. Always carry extra food as a person is often hungrier when performing physical activity than when packing.

ACTIVITY

Time: 10 min

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to have cadets prepare an IMP for a meal.

RESOURCES

- IMP (one per cadet);
- 2 Pots (large enough to hold IMPs and to boil potable water);
- Fuelled two-burner naphtha stove;
- Pot set;
- Potable water; and
- Matches.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Designated cooking area in a field setting.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Provide each cadet with an IMP meal appropriate for the time of day.
2. Have cadets follow along, preparing their IMPs for consumption.
3. Explain and demonstrate how to use, heat and consume all items in the IMP.
4. Cadets will consume the IMP they prepared following the tips they have learned.

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SAFETY

Ensure caution when operating stoves and handling the IMPs once they are removed from the hot water. Caution, the boiling water produces a very hot steam that can scald the skin, causing a serious burn.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

The cadets' participation in the activity in TP3 will serve as a confirmation of this lesson.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in the activity in TP3 will serve as a confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

An IMP provides nutrients and energy for the active Army Cadet, especially during vigorous expedition training. Learning to prepare IMPs contents is a skill that will be needed while taking part in expedition training.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

This lesson is best instructed prior to a meal hour.

REFERENCES

A2-042 A-85-269-001/FP-003 Canadian Forces. (1986). *Food Service Manual: Field Feeding* (Vol. 1). Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

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