ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

RED STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 4

EO M224.04 – IDENTIFY EMERGENCY SHELTERS

Total Time: 60 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.

Seek out or construct shelters for TP2 and TP3. It is imperative that cadets have a visual example of each shelter. However, it is understood that terrain differences may limit the ability to locate all shelters mentioned.



The definition of leeward is on or towards the side sheltered from the wind (e.g. if the wind is blowing against the front of a car the leeward side would be the rear of the car.)

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TP1 to TP3 to introduce factors to consider when identifying emergency shelters as a new subject and to present basic or background material.

A practical activity was chosen for TP4 as it is an interactive way to allow cadets to seek out emergency shelters in a natural setting.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

The review for this lesson is from the previous lesson M224.01 (Describe Immediate Actions To Take When Lost).

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QUESTIONS

Q1. What does the acronym S.T.O.P stand for?

Q2. What are the five elements of survival?

Q3. What is the second element of survival when you find you are lost?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Sit, Think, Observe, Plan.

A2. Attitude, shelter, water, fire and food.

A3. Shelter.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to identify emergency shelters that are natural or improvised and ensure their site chosen will provide them with comfort throughout their stay.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to be able to identify a shelter or construct an emergency shelter because shelter is identified as one of the elements of survival. Construction of a shelter is the second survival element that should be completed once the cadets know they are lost.

Teaching point 1 **Explain Factors to Consider When Selecting a Site for an Emergency Shelter**

Time: 15 min Method: Interactive Lecture



The instruction area for this lesson will meet the factors of site selection as detailed in TP1.

Cadets will be expected to identify a type of shelter by the end of this lesson. Introduce this TP by presenting the cadets with a scenario where they have become lost in the field and they have only a few hours of daylight left.

Shelter is their first concern. The location chosen to demonstrate the selection of a site should meet most if not all considerations when choosing a location. Question the cadets enquiring what they currently think of the location. These questions should get their thoughts thinking about what considerations they would take into account when choosing a site.

Continue this lesson by identifying the rest of the factors and considerations described in TP1.

During the summer months the need for shelter is not always a great concern however it should be. Even in winter a survivor may be tempted to set up a fire the first night rather than tackle the job of building or finding a shelter. When discussing the five elements of survival, shelter is the second survival element, before fire. A shelter provides protection from the elements, particularly wind and precipitation. Shelters improve morale and survival chances by providing comfort, security and a sense of accomplishment.

TERRAIN CONSIDERATIONS

There are Several Factors that Must be Considered When Selecting a Site. Locations to construct a shelter should meet certain criteria, to avoid being awoken during the night due to an over-looked problem.

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Select an Area that is Large Enough for the Planned Shelter. Possible sites that are perfect in their natural form may be too small to accommodate the size of one person. Ensure that the site chosen can comfortably, considering the situation, fit oneself for the duration of the survival situation.

Select an Area that is Elevated and Provides Drainage. A site should provide dry footing and drainage of future rains. Keep back from rivers or lakes which may flood after a rain fall.

Identify Sheltered Areas that Protect From Wind, Rain and Sun. Shelter from the wind, rain and sun can be sought from boulders, hillsides, trees or whatever source may be available. In the summer a little breeze will reduce the number of insects and can keep one cool during hot summer days. During winter a shelter will separate the body from the elements and provide warmth. If the entrance of the shelter faces leeward (away from the wind), rain or snow will swirl over and drop inside. If the entrance faces windward, smoke and ashes from the fire will blow into the shelter. Place the back of the shelter into the wind (see Figure 6).

LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS

Proximity to a Water Source that Provides Potable Water and Food from Fishing. The availability of a nearby water source will reduce the amount of energy expended while collecting water. A source of water may also provide fishing grounds that may supply food.

Proximity to a Fuel Source for Fire During Cold Weather. Situating a shelter near a fuel source will reduce the amount of energy required to gather enough fuel for the fire.

Proximity to Building Materials. Although the shelter is an emergency shelter there is always the need to make what is natural more liveable. Situating the shelter near building supplies will reduce the amount of energy required to build and secure the shelter.

Proximity to Animal Trails or Holes. In the wild, the food chain is active. Beware of locating your shelter near the natural paths animals create. Where there are animals, there may be danger.

Select Areas that are Close to or can be Seen by Aircraft From Above. When lost in a wilderness area it is important to remember you have to establish contact with or attract the attention of searchers and rescuers. Staying in a site that is easily seen from above will increase your chances of being rescued.

Estimate the Time Required to Build a Shelter Before Night Fall. Depending on the amount of time available, one may choose to construct a simple emergency shelter for the night. Estimate the amount of daylight left when constructing a shelter by looking at the horizon. If the sun is near the horizon, there is not much daylight left.

The Entrance Should be Sheltered From the Wind and Preferably in the Direction of the Sun. Situating the shelter so the prevailing wind is blowing against the rear will help ensure the occupant will be able to maintain some heat inside. Face the entrance, if possible, into the sun allowing the sunshine into the shelter. This provides heat to the occupant.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. What are three terrain considerations one should take into account when selecting a shelter site?

Q2. What are three considerations of a site location that one should take into account?

Q3. Which way should the entrance of a shelter face?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Select an area that is large enough for the planned shelter, elevated and provides drainage, and helps protect from the wind, rain and sun.

A2. The location should be in close proximity to a water source that provides potable water and food from fishing. It should also be close to building materials but far from animal trails or holes.

A3. The entrance should face the leeward side (away from the wind).

Teaching point 2 **Identify Types of Natural Shelters**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Conduct a tour of actual shelters. Examples help illustrate what each shelter looks like and provide cadets with insight into each shelter's purpose.

Have cadets inspect each shelter type.

TREE HOLLOW

A tree hollow is a good natural shelter that can be used in a hurry when there is little time to construct something more permanent. It is often found under a tree, especially a large conifer. Lower branches hanging over the hollow may form a kind of roof to block out the wind and rain.



Berger, K., Backpacking and Hiking, DK Publishing, Inc. (p. 203)

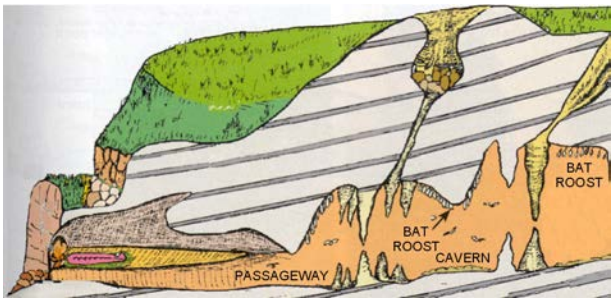
Figure 1 Tree Hollow

CAVE

A cave is an ideal shelter as it offers a roof, constant temperature and is secure.

Caves are found along cliffs or along coast lines especially if the water levels have receded; however, these caves most likely were formed by wave action. Be cautious of high tide.

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Tawrell, P., Camping and Wilderness Survival, Leonard Paul Tawrell (p. 409)

Figure 2 Cave

ROOT SHELTER

A root shelter will provide good separation from the wind with little preparation. Be cautious as water tends to pool at the base of the roots during a rain fall. The roots are used as the frame for the shelter and are located at the base of a fallen tree. Add additional branches or boughs as a windbreak and dig into the ground to improve the shelter.



Tawrell, P., Camping and Wilderness Survival, Leonard Paul Tawrell (p. 397)

Figure 3 Root Shelter

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

The cadets' inspection of natural shelters will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

Teaching point 3 **Identify Types of Improvised Shelters**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Conduct a tour of actual shelters. Examples help illustrate what each shelter looks like and provide cadets with insight into each shelter's purpose.

Have cadets inspect each shelter type.

An improvised shelter is constructed from whatever is available, with little preparation. The type of shelter built will depend on local weather conditions, the materials available and how long the shelter is needed.

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BOUGH SHELTER

A bough shelter, also known as a lopped tree shelter, makes use of a naturally fallen tree. With some preparation this shelter provides good cover from the elements. The fallen tree branches are cut from the centre of the tree, creating a hollow for shelter. The excess branches are woven through the remaining tree branches, making the shelter weatherproof.



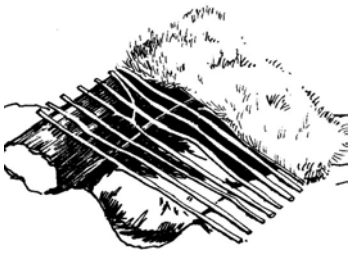
Wiseman, J., The SAS Survival Handbook, HarperCollins Publishers (p. 245)

Figure 4 Bough Shelter

FALLEN TRUNK

A log or fallen tree trunk makes a useful wind break on its own if it is against the wind. This shelter can be a quickly prepared temporary shelter when time for construction is limited; however, it can be developed into a more permanent shelter with some additional preparation.

If the trunk is small scoop out a hollow in the ground to increase the size of the shelter. The hollow should be opposite the wind (leeward side). A log also makes an excellent support for a lean-to roof of boughs.



Wiseman, J., The SAS Survival Handbook, HarperCollins Publishers (p. 245)

Figure 5 Fallen Trunk

LEAN-TO

The lean-to is one of the most practical and multipurpose shelters. It is easy to assemble and can be built using a support structure of two trees and some poles.

This shelter is constructed by erecting a horizontal crosspiece between trees. On the side facing towards the wind, lean sticks or branches at a 45 degree angle making a roof, and cover the roof with boughs to provide windproofing and waterproofing. If required, add cross ribbing to the roof to provide support for the objects that cover the roof. When using boughs, ensure they are laid upside down to allow rain to run off. Side walls can be added if necessary.

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Tawrell, P., Camping and Wilderness Survival, Leonard Paul Tawrell (p. 457)

Figure 6 Lean-To

SNOW CAVE

A snow cave is made from snow drifts and typically provides shelter for a night or two.

To construct a snow cave, dig into a firm large snowdrift, make an entry hole at the low side of the drift and dig up from the entrance to carve out a sleeping shelf.

Block the entry hole with snow and poke ventilation holes in the ceiling to provide plenty of fresh air.



Berger, K., Backpacking and Hiking, DK Publishing, Inc. (p. 203)

Figure 7 Snow Cave

TEPEE

The tepee was developed by nomadic people, it can act as a more permanent shelter.

The tepee is a series of poles sloped in to lean against each other. The sloped poles can be covered with materials to provide a wind break or completely made up of poles. Depending on the materials at hand, they can be constructed quickly.



Tawrell, P., Camping and Wilderness Survival, Leonard Paul Tawrell (p. 105)

Figure 8 Tepee

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

The cadets' inspection of improvised shelters will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

Teaching point 4 **Locate Natural or Improvised Shelter Sites**

Time: 20 min Method: Practical Activity

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to allow the cadets to seek out natural shelters or improvised shelter locations.

RESOURCES

N/A.

ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Provide boundaries for cadets to explore.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide cadets into groups of three or four.
- Have cadets seek out natural shelters and shelter locations.
- Cadets will have 15 minutes to identify a natural shelter or an improvised shelter location.
- Confirm each group has identified an appropriate shelter or shelter location.

SAFETY

The area chosen to conduct this activity will be given boundaries so the cadets will not wander off searching for natural shelters and setting up improvised shelters. A larger area may be used if additional supervision is provided.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in the activity in TP4 will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

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CLOSING STATEMENT

Any cadet who is lost can find a natural shelter or construct a shelter quickly. Remember finding shelter is the second element to survival.

A cadet in a survival situation will now have the knowledge to find a shelter and prolong life while awaiting rescue.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

N/A.

REFERENCES

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