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U.S. Army Garrison-West Point DPTMS – Range Operations Policy & Procedures

Standard Operating Procedure Pine Ridge Rappel Site



Department of the Army
U.S. Army Garrison West Point
United States Military Academy
West Point, New York 10996-5000

Document History

Document Location

All hard copies will be located at Building 1403 Range Operations Fire Desk. Also, electronic copies may be retrieved via DPTMS website (Training Link), or upon request.

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title
	USAG-WP, Range Manager
	USAG-WP, Chief of Training
	USAG-WP, Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization & Security

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1. General Information

1.1 Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides standard instructions and checklists for unit and individuals using the Pine Ridge Rappel Site. It defines standardized steps and procedures to be followed for its safe and efficient use.

This SOP is directive based and complies with applicable United States Military Academy and Department of the Army Regulations, current doctrine, policy and guidance.

1.2 Applicability

This SOP is designed to provide units with safe operating procedures and guidelines. It applies to all units of the U. S. Armed Forces, civilian organizations, and individuals who are authorized to use this training facility at West Point, and by all applicable users IAW West Point Regulation 350-11 and TC 3-22.20, Army Physical Readiness Training.

1.3 Responsibility

Use this SOP in conjunction with TC 3-22.20 and West Point Reg. 350-11 which provide specific and detailed specialty course responsibilities for using units. These directed and required actions are necessary for the safe conduct of rappelling activities. Full compliance IAW the afore-mentioned regulations as well as steps and procedures of this SOP, is the responsibility of the commanders, as well as the personnel of using organizations or units. Personnel of any non-DoD civilian agency or activity, using West Point ranges and training facilities must also comply with the provisions and requirements outlined in West Point Reg. 350-11.

1.4 References

All required and related publications are those covering the training conducted and those listed in the applicable chapters of West Point Reg. 350-11 or other respective regulations, policies and procedures. Additional references are also listed at Appendix E, of TC 21-24, Rappelling.

1.5 Suggested Improvements

The proponent of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is the Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, U.S. Army Garrison West Point, ATTN: DPTMS, Building 621 Wilson Road, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York 10996-5000. Users are encouraged to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms).

2. Specialty Course Description & Characteristics

2.1 Course Description

The Pine Ridge Rappel Site offers a 25 foot practice wall and 75 foot rappel wall. Lanes are also available for hasty rappel, body rappel and balance climb.

The Pine Ridge Rappel Site offers facilities for the training of beginner through advanced rappelling. It is designed for soldiers to receive instruction, practice their skills and then conduct rappel training

2.2 Course Location

The Pine Ridge Rappel Site is located at WL77227615 in Training Area A1. The site is accessed through Gate 38 on Bull Pond Road.

2.3 Specific Safety Measures

A unit must have the following on site in order to conduct training at the Air Assault Training Site:

- a. Certified OIC (Air Assault/Ranger/Sapper or Rappel Master)
- b. DOD Certified Rappel Master or Civilian Equivalent
- c. One Rappel Lane NCO (RSO) per Rappel station (Rappel Master)
- d. One Belayer for each rope station
- e. Two military rappel ropes for each rope station.
- f. Gloves and helmets.
- g. A trained medical aid person, MOS qualified. This individual will be equipped with a litter, Spine board, neck brace and radio communication, and a complete medical aid bag, containing all required CL VIII items that have a valid expiration date.
- h. A dedicated medical evacuation vehicle, capable of transporting a litter, and properly equipped, and with a current PMCS. Medical aid personnel assigned to these ranges, along with the supporting medical vehicle, will not be used for any other duty.
- i. A dedicated evacuation vehicle capable of carrying a litter with driver.
- j. Communications equipment for continuous communication with Range Operations.
- k. Units will provide all equipment for rappelling training, to include ropes, karabiners, rappel harnesses/Swiss seats and all PPE.

2.4 Authorized Parking

Military Vehicles – Military parking is next to the course.

Civilian Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs) – Range Operations will issue parking passes for the OIC and RSO. There is no other POV parking available.

2.5 Communications

All specialty courses must maintain two separate means of communication with Range Operations at all times. Primary means of communication with Range Operations will be by issued Motorola Handheld on the "Live Fire" Channel.

There is NO commercial telephone available at the Pine Ridge Rappel Site.

2.6 Individual Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

- a. Ballistic (Kevlar or Army Combat Helmet (ACH) is to be worn for safety and protection by all personnel negotiating participating in rappelling activities and individuals in close proximity to rappel tower. The use of ACH is mandatory.
- b. The use of leather gloves is mandatory. Gloves should be re-enforced, preferably with a double-layered, abrasion resistant surface on palms.

2.7 Facility Specific Safety Measures

A unit must have the following on site in order to conduct training at the Air Assault Training Site:

- a. Certified OIC (Air Assault/Ranger/Sapper or Rappel Master)
- b. DOD Certified Rappel Master or Civilian Equivalent
- c. One Rappel Lane NCO (RSO) per Rappel station (Rappel Master)
- d. One Belayer for each rope station
- e. Two military rappel ropes for each rope station.
- f. Gloves and helmets.
- g. A trained medical aid person, MOS qualified. This individual will be equipped with a litter, Spine board, neck brace and radio communication, and a complete medical aid bag, containing all required CL VIII items that have a valid expiration date.
- h. A dedicated medical evacuation vehicle, capable of transporting a litter, and properly equipped, and with a current PMCS. Medical aid personnel assigned to these ranges, along with the supporting medical vehicle, will not be used for any other duty.
- i. A dedicated evacuation vehicle capable of carrying a litter with driver.
- j. Communications equipment for continuous communication with Range Operations.
- k. Units will provide all equipment for rappelling training, to include ropes, karabiners, rappel harnesses/Swiss seats and all PPE.

3. Course Operational Requirements/Responsibilities

3.1 Officer in Charge (OIC) / Range Safety Officer (RSO) Appointment Requirements

WEAPON SYSTEM	OFFICER IN CHARGE (OIC)			RANGE SAFETY OFFICER (RSO)		
	OFF	CADET	NCO	OFF	CADET	NCO
Practice hand grenade simunitions training devices; simulators, and small arms (5.56mm and below)	Х	N/A	E6(P)	Х	X (Wpns Qualified)	E5(P)
Chemical Agents (CS) and smoke	Х	N/A	E6 (MOS Qualified)	x	N/A	E5
Aerial gunnery, live grenades, grenade launchers, grenade machine guns; Live mines, and demolitions.	Х	N/A	E7	Х	N/A	E6
Field Artillery and LASER ranges	X (0-3)	N/A	N/A	Battery XO X	N/A	N/A
Live Fire Exercises using organic weapons, team through squad.	Х	N/A	N/A	Х	N/A	E7
Mortars	Х	N/A	N/A	Х	N/A	E6
Direct fire antitank rockets	Х	N/A	E7	Х	N/A	E6
Specialty Non-LFX Courses	Х	N/A	E6	Х	Х	Х
Specialty Non-LFX Courses (Rappel) * Rappel Master Certified	X*	N/A	E7*	Х	N/A	E6

Table 4-1, OIC / RSO Appointment Requirements

3.2 Officer in Charge (OIC)

The Range OIC holds the responsibility and accountability for the conduct of the activity and the adherence to governing regulations and guidance.

3.2.1 OIC Qualifications

A commissioned, warrant, or noncommissioned officer (NCO) may serve as a Specialty Course OIC. NCOs serving as OIC will be in the grade as shown in Table 4-1 above, at a minimum. Facility OICs will be qualified on the safe conduct of obstacle negotiation and will have

satisfactorily completed a safety certification program for which they are responsible conducted by their Battalion/Unit (O5 & above Command) to which they are assigned.

3.2.2 OIC Actions & Procedures before Facility Occupation

STEP	ACTION	TAKEN
1	Thoroughly plan the operation and/or training activity and determine the personnel and equipment support requirements.	
2	Be command safety certified and appointment is completed, and on file at Range Operations.	
3	Receive the mandatory Range Operations briefing within ONE DAY prior to use.	
4	Ensure qualified obstacle instructors are trained on the operation and correct negotiation of each obstacle prior to running the course.	
5	Verify that all personnel in a direct supervisory role or safety position are familiar with the provisions of this SOP, West Point Reg. 350-11, and TC 3-22.20, Army Physical Readiness Training.	
6	Ensures that the required and appropriate medical support personnel are qualified. All appropriate equipment and supplies are available to support the training activity.	
7	Check in at Range Operations upon arrival to the installation to receive an updated briefing and sign for the facility and necessary support equipment.	
8	Develops a composite risk management worksheet for all phases of the range operation(s) and/or training activity, and mitigate initial high and extremely high hazards through appropriate control measures, using DA Form 2977.	

3.2.3 OIC Actions & Procedures before Operations

STEP	ACTION	TAKEN
1	Ensures the correct training facility is occupied, and conducts a joint inventory with a Range Operations representative to ensure the presence and condition of the facilities, safety equipment and general condition of each obstacle.	
2	Conducts an OIC safety brief to the obstacle instructors, reinforcing their duties and responsibilities on the conduct of each obstacle and general safety requirements.	
3	Directs and supervises that the required designated areas of the training facility are established and set up as required/planned.	
4	Establishes radio and communications with Range Operations, and notifies Range Operations upon initial occupation.	
5	Verify that the required medical personnel and equipment support is on site, with strip maps to local medical treatment facilities is present, prior to requesting a HOT status.	
6	Verify the continuous safety and security of all personnel as they negotiate obstacles. Ensure that obstacle negotiation demonstrations are conducted when necessary.	
7	Verify that all personnel wear the required personal protection equipment, as the commander dictates.	
8	Ensure all applicable references and regulations are physically present and on hand:	
9	Notifies Range Operations and requests permission to place the range in a HOT status (Refer to paragraph 7.1).	
10	Implements risk management actions and applicable control measures identified for this phase of the range operations and/or training event.	

3.2.4 OIC Actions & Procedures during Operations

STEP	ACTION	TAKEN	
1	Be present at all times at the confidence course training facility while the facility is in a HOT status, and maintains a constant observation of the facility to ensure that obstacles are being safely and properly negotiated. Greet and brief all range visitors/VIPs, and Range Operations personnel.		
2	Verify that all personnel prior to negotiating obstacles receive a safety briefing, and that each obstacle is negotiated properly and safely.		
3	Ensures that communications with Range Operations are maintained, and that hourly radio checks are performed (Refer to paragraph 7.4)		
4	Immediately calls or announces a self-imposed "Cease Training" and notifies Range Operations when:		
4a	Any unsafe action is observed or reported by ANY individual observing an unsafe act.		
4b	When communications are lost with Range Operations and/or Gate Guards.		
4c	When any personal injury occurs.		
4d	Whenever the OIC or medical support leaves the training facility.		
4e	e Notifies Range Operations when a change in OIC is needed (refer to paragraph 7.3).		
5	Implements risk management actions and applicable control measures identified for this phase of the range operations and/or training event.		

3.2.5 OIC Actions & Procedures after Operations

STEP	ACTION	TAKEN
1	Notify Range Operations upon completion of training and request permission to go COLD (reference procedure 7.2). Be prepared to report:	
1a	Number of personnel trained.	
2	Contact Range Operations for range clearance/inspection after performing the following:	
2a	Remediate any obstacle deficiency created during facility use (i.e. raking sand pits) and replace safety equipment in appropriate storage area.	
2b	Police range for all trash and place in local dumpster. NO MREs, kitchen waste will be placed in the dumpsters.	
2c	Check overall condition of the range to include all range support facilities and repair any deficiencies or faults discovered if applicable.	
2d	Hand receipted range equipment and supplies are recovered, cleaned and prepared for turn-in.	
3	Conduct a joint inventory IAW range clearance agreement with a Range Operations representative for clearance of the training area, and secure the facility.	
4	Return all hand-receipted range equipment, along with any applicable reports/forms to Range Operations.	

4. Specialty Course Medical Requirements & Evacuation

4.1 Unit Medical Support Requirements

Units will comply with the following range medical support requirements:

- a. A trained medical aid person, MOS qualified. This individual will be equipped with a litter, radio communication, and a complete medical aid bag, containing all required CL VIII items that have a valid expiration date.
- b. A dedicated medical evacuation vehicle, capable of transporting a litter, and properly equipped, and with a current PMCS. Medical aid personnel assigned to these ranges, along with the supporting medical vehicle, will not be used for any other duty.

4.1.1 Execution

- a. Using unit medical personnel will review and familiarize themselves with the strip map route(s) to KACH ER and the local community hospital prior to conducting operations.
- b. Whenever the dedicated medical aid person or vehicle must leave the area for any reason the training facility must "Cease Training" and remains in a "COLD" status until a replacement is provided, or until the assigned vehicle and medical personnel have returned to the facility. Range Operations will then grant the unit permission to re-open the facility and place the facility in a "HOT" status.
- c. Medical support personnel at the facility will provide treatment for minor injuries and basic first-aid for life-threatening injury or illness.
- d. Medical evacuation vehicles will display all frequencies and telephone numbers in case of immediate use:
 - a. Range Operations Frequency is on Motorola Handheld "LIVEFIRE" Channel.
 - b. West Point Fire & Emergency Services Division 845.938.5197
 - c. KACH ER frequency is VHF 150.7.
 - d. KACH ER 845.938.4004 / 5169.

4.2 Keller Army Community Hospital (KACH)

Injuries and/or illness requiring immediate emergency support will be immediately reported to the KACH ER, with the location of the site for patient evacuation by KACH.

4.3 Serious Incident Report (SIR) Requirements

Full and immediate medical attention directed at the patient is the first and foremost priority. As soon as possible, the OIC will contact Range Operations and report the medical injury/accident. Be prepared to provide at a minimum "the Five W's" (Who, What, When, Where and Why).

4.4 Emergency MEDEVAC Flight Requests

The USMA does NOT have an organic MEDEVAC capability to support training complex operations; units and organizations will plan medical evacuation with their organic assets. Stat

Flights are for the emergency evacuation of injured personnel by air ambulance. Only the emergency first responder on site, DES dispatcher or KACH medical personnel are authorized to request or terminate a MEDEVAC mission.

To obtain a Stat Flight, contact Range Operations by Motorola Handheld "LIVEFIRE" Channel or by telephone at (845)938-3930. After Hours the Military Police Dispatch at (845)938-3333. Air Frequency is VHF 126.20.

	9-LINE MEDEVAC					
ANNOUNCED		LINE INFO DECODIDATION				
LINE	LINE INFO	LINE INFO DESCRIPTION				
1		Location of the Pick-Up site by 6-digit grid and any prominent terrain features nearby.				
2		Unit Identification				
3	A= B=	Number of Patients by evacuation category/precedence A=Urgent (requires immediate evacuation to prevent loss of life B=Priority (serious injury, but NOT life threatening				
4	A= B= C= D=	Special equipment needed: A=none B=hoist C=extraction equipment D=ventilator				
5	A= B=	Number of patients A=litter B=ambulatory				
6		Number and types of wounds, injuries and illnesses				
7		Method of marking landing zone/pick-up site A=panels B=pyrotechnic signal C=smoke signal D=none E=other				
8		Patient nationality and status A=US military B=US civilian C=other (describe)				
9		Terrain description of pick-up site, any site hazards; if none=so state				

4.5 Hospital Strip Maps & Directions

4.5.1 Keller Army Community Hospital

Reference Tab 10A, Local Strip Map to Keller Army Community Hospital

4.5.2 St. Luke's Community Cornwall Campus Hospital, Cornwall, NY

Reference Tab 10B, Local Strip Map to Saint Luke's Community Hospital.

5. Radio Procedures

5.1 Requesting a Hot Status

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, OVER

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. GO AHEAD, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. REQUEST A HOT TIME, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: MARNE CONFIDENCE COURSE, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS, DO YOU PHYSICALLY HAVE ON SITE REQUIRED MEDICAL SUPPORT WITH EQUIPMENT, FACILITY SAFETY SOP BINDER, RED RANGE FLAG FLYING, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, YES, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. I GIVE YOU A HOT TIME OF _____ HOURS. MY INITIALS ARE _____. CONFIRM HOT TIME AND SEND YOUR FACILITY OIC INITIALS, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. I CONFIRM HOT TIME OF . OIC INITIALS ARE , OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. CONDUCT RADIO CHECKS WITH RANGE OPERATIONS HOURLY AT THE TOP OF THE HOUR, YOUR FIRST RADIO CHECK IS DUE AT _____. RANGE OPERATIONS OUT.

5.2 Requesting a Cold Status

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. GO AHEAD, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. REQUEST A COLD TIME, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. I GIVE YOU A COLD TIME OF _____. MY INITIALS ARE _____. CONFIRM COLD TIME, SEND YOUR OIC INITIALS, AND YOUR NUMBER OF PERSONNEL TRAINED, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. I CONFIRM COLD TIME OF . OIC INITIALS ARE , WITH (#) PERSONNEL TRAINED, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS, ROGER, OUT.

5.3 Change of OIC

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. GO AHEAD, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. REQUEST A CHANGE OF OIC, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. SEND THE LAST NAME AND THE INITIALS OF THE NEW OIC, WITH YOUR INITIALS, OVER.

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. NEW OIC LAST NAME IS _____, NEW OIC INITIALS ARE _____. MY INITIALS ARE _____, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS. ROGER, OUT.

5.4 Requesting a Radio Check (Hourly at the Top of the Hour)

FACILITY: RANGE OPERATIONS, THIS IS PINE RIDGE RAPPEL. RADIO CHECK, OVER.

RANGE OPERATIONS: PINE RIDGE RAPPEL, THIS IS RANGE OPERATIONS, ROGER RADIO CHECK, OUT.

6. Safety Brief

This general safety brief in not all inclusive and requires the OIC to include commander's guidance, and/or any unit specific or other situational dependent areas of concern.

The following personnel and equipment must be present during static tower training:

- 1. Two military rappel ropes for each rappel station.
- 2. One safety officer and one Rappel Master for each rappel site.
- 3. One rappel lane NCO per rappel station.
- 4. One medic with medical kit and backboard.
- 5. One safety or medical evacuation vehicle with driver.
- 6. One belayer for each rope station. Rappellers alternate stations.
- 7. ** One belay safety for each two rappel stations (four ropes).

SAFETY BRIEFING: This general safety brief in not all inclusive and requires the OIC to include commander's guidance, and/or any unit specific or other situational dependent areas of concern:

- 1. Identify the Officer in Charge (OIC) and the Safety Officer (SO) at a minimum.
- 2. Identify the Location of Instructors, Medic & the Evacuation Vehicle and others as required.
- 3. Prescribed uniforms and personal protection requirements (helmet and leather gloves as applicable).
- 4. Locations: Break/Smoking Areas, latrines, mess area, parking and bleacher site. Also include any off limit or restricted areas.
- 5. Procedures for Medical Emergency.
- 6. Severe weather plan, environmental requirements, issues and concerns.
- 7. ALL VEHICLES on this Range will have a GROUND GUIDE.
- 8. Movement on site only as directed by the instructors.
- 9. NO pushing, NO shoving or horseplay at ANY time.
- 10. If you observe ANY UNSAFE situation, call & indicate "CEASE TRAINING" IMMEDIATELY.
- 11. The course should not be used in wet weather if it makes the obstacles slippery.

The rappel master briefs all personnel on safety to include the following instructions:

- 1. Each rappeller ensures loose clothing and equipment are secured.
- Rappel seats are tied (or harnesses donned) by the Soldier and inspected by the rappel
 master before climbing the tower. Rappel seats are removed upon completion of every
 rappel. They are then retied and re-inspected by a qualified rappel master or rappel lane
 NCO before subsequent rappels
- 3. Rappellers enter lanes only when directed by the rappel master or rappel lane NCO.
- 4. All personnel working within 10 feet of the edge of rappel lane must wear a restraining strap, safety rope attached to the anchor, or safety rope attached to the rappel rope with break applied. No one is allowed within 10 feet of the tower's top edge without being secured.
- 5. No one should lean or sit any safety rope or railing on the rappel lanes.

^{**} Belay Safety must be Ranger or Air Assault qualified.

- 6. When attaching the rappel rope to the snap link, rappellers pull the slack toward the anchor point. The rappel master or rappel lane NCO physically check each hookup.
- 7. All personnel weighing more than 200 pounds will conduct a standard hookup rappel to determine if they require a friction hookup. A friction hookup is created by placing an additional two ropes in the gate of the snap link (for a total of six ropes in the snap link).
- 8. Combat equipment is positioned on the rappeller so it does not interfere with the brake hand. The weapon must be slung diagonally across the back with the muzzle pointing down, and on the opposite side of the brake hand.
- 9. Heavy duty gloves are required for all rappel training.
- 10. Ballistic or safety helmets with chin straps fastened are worn during tower rappel training.
- 11. While on the rappel site, the rappeller maintains eye contact with the rappel master or rappel lane NCO and receives all commands from them.
- 12. The rappeller ensures that he has a belayer on his rope.
- 13. The belayer keeps both hands on the rope at all times. He also faces the rappeller at all times.
- 14. All rappelling is performed with a double strand of rope.
- 15. No running is allowed on any portion of the rappel lanes.
- 16. No smoking or eating is allowed near the rappel lanes.
- 17. All participants who are unable to rappel, lack confidence, or refuse to rappel are reported to the rappel master or OIC. These participants are immediately removed from the training area.
- 18. The RSO and rappel master must be aware of the overconfidence and carelessness of some rappellers. The rappel master ensures all personnel are tower qualified before beginning aircraft rappel training.

NOTE: Insert appropriate risk management worksheet hazards and control measures identified as applicable as required and/or applicable.

7. Risk Management & Mitigation

OIC will review, add and update DA Form 2977, Deliberate Risk Assessment Worksheet.

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8. Reference Information, Reports & Forms

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TAB	NAME
10A	Local Strip Map to Keller Army Community Hospital
10B	Local Strip Map to Saint Luke's Cornwall Community Hospital
10C	Open



