

## Shenley ERT

Emergency Rescue Teams (ERTs) operate everywhere on Poseidon, even in the back end of nowhere. Shenley is a small town in the Endeavor Islands, developed by the GEO to encourage population dispersal across Poseidon. It's a valuable base for Long John prospectors, HIST survey teams, and others explorers and colonists.

So far from anywhere, all these people get into trouble. That's where the Shenley ERT and the characters come in. The ERT is an elite combination of search-and-rescue, paramedics, and airlift doctors. When things go wrong, they swoop in and save lives. The team has a huge patch with potential casualties scattered all over. And the nearest backup is 20,000km away...

## Background

Shenley was planned to be a regional center for colonization of the Endeavor Islands, but other demands in Pacifica and then the Long John rush have made large changes. The town now has several thousand colonists, serves as a base for another few thousand Long John prospectors, and is a logistics hub for exploration of the region.

All these people need support in times of trouble, so Shenley is the base for a GEO Emergency Response Team. The ERT features medics, firefighters, engineers, aircrew, divers, hinterlanders, and a range of other specialists. It is responsible for an area of over 20 million km<sup>2</sup> and charged with responding to every emergency in the region.

But Shenley is a long way from Haven, and is largely forgotten by the rest of Poseidon. Resources are tight, resupply is infrequent, and backup and oversight are distant. ERT members absolutely have to rely on their own initiative and moral compass.

## Campaign Framework

The Shenley ERT archetype combines action sequences with life and death on the line, impossible moral choices, and the drama that pressure creates among those who do this job.

Most sessions revolve around episodic "rescues of the week", where the team deals with dangerous situations and saves lives. These work best when interspersed with the challenges of living on the frontier and characters dealing with the physical and emotional toll that comes from such a high stress job. When threaded through with complicating plotlines this combination of action and drama can sustain a long and exciting campaign.

## Location

The Shenley ERT has a small base in the GEO colony town of Shenley, Endeavor Islands of Poseidon's Outback region. Tensions between GEO pioneers, Biogene interests, and private prospectors wary of everyone - especially other prospectors - are

constant, complicating undercurrents. The isolation of the Outback and the Long John riches hidden there mean corners are cut and disaster is always one skipped safety check away. See "The Outback" on page XX and "Shenley" on page XX for more regional details.

### Player Characters

All player characters should be competent members of the ERT, able to take part in the frequent rescue operations that are the mainstay of these stories. They are likely to be committed to the ideals of the job, motivated more by helping others than fame or money. They should all be willing to take risks and put themselves in danger to help others in need.

Most ERT members will have trained on Earth, trading their skills for passage to Poseidon. Inhabitants of Poseidon would have trained at the Colonial ERT Training Center (page XX). The CTC provides the best emergency worker training on the planet and slots are in high demand, even from Incorporated citizens. HCHR requires at least three years' service in an ERT after training, before graduates can move to private service.

Players may want to play against type, with a PC who recently graduated from the CTC and now finds ERT life is not for them, or an older character now too old or too jaded for the job and who will soon retire - or be fired.

Hybrids are over-represented in the ERTs, as it is an avenue for GEO service outside the military and law enforcement.

Most ERT members have neural jacks and immunological symbiotes. Other biomods - anti-poison, respiratory filters, adrenal shunts, programmed reflexes - are common. HCHR subsidises these biomods by allowing ERT members to "work off" the cost while under contract.

### Non-player characters

#### Himani Bose

Himani is one of the half-dozen GEO doctors in Shenley. She works as a GP in Shenley's clinic, and accompanies the ERT when additional medics may be needed. She prepares meticulously and is physically brave. She was one of the original colonists who set up Shenley; she's getting close to retirement and is increasingly exasperated by the rivalry between "Stonies" and "Fennies."

COG 2 PSY 0 COR 2 PHY0

Aquaform

6 Life sciences > Doctor > Rapid diagnosis

4 Adventurer > Extreme sports > Level headed

Vidko Lopan

Vidko is one of the ERT's civilian dispatchers, working in the office in Shenley to coordinate the team's activities. He organizes day-to-day activities, like routine safety inspections and training exercises. During an emergency, he provides background information and serves as a liaison. He's always the voice of calm and reason, a rock the team depends on. Outside work, he's so shy he's almost a recluse. His multiple sclerosis is mostly controlled by meds, but he's saving up for the gene therapy.

COG 2 PSY -1 COR -1 PHY 1

Modi

5 ERT support > Dispatcher > Unflustered communication

4 Outback geography > Tides and currents > Weather prediction

Fixer

Fixer is the chief mechanic for the ERT's vehicles and equipment. They're a Peacekeeper veteran, but you wouldn't know it from the chaotic state of their workshop. They're always tinkering with odds and ends, often pulling all-nighters. They say this is fine, and due to cetacean sleep patterns; it's actually an unhealthy trauma response..

COG 0 PSY 1 COR 1 PHY 3

Bottlenose fin

6 Engineer > Vehicle maintenance > Aircraft repair

4 Ex GEO Peacekeeper > Bureaucracy > Scrounging parts

Usaimah Hauksdóttir

Usaimah is a part-time prospector, part-time guide, and part-time Warden. She became rich a few months ago when the ERT rescued her from a xenosilicate mining disaster. The ERT returned her to Shenley along with 1.5 kilograms of uncommonly pure xenosilicate and the bodies of her comrades. She is oddly compelled to pay off what she sees as a moral debt to the ERT by helping them where she can. She's trusted by the local prospectors and has good contacts among them.

COG -1 PSY 1 COR 2 PHY 2

Modi

5 Outback guide > Watercraft > Submarine pilot

5 Outback culture > Prospector contacts > Trustworthy rumours

Skill Sets

PCs should have one skill set representing their ERT training (and a specialty within that), and probably have an additional skill set that is also applicable to their role in the team.

Examples include:

ERT member > Team leader > Cool headed

ERT member > Firefighter > Search and rescue

Diver > Underwater hazards > Underwater rescue

Engineering > Mechanical systems > Propulsion systems

Other skill sets should reflect the range of backgrounds and interests of all characters on Poseidon.

### Tracks

Most PCs will have either a "Dedication" track, to reflect their commitment to the job, or a "Shenley ERT" track for their commitment to the team. There's story fun to be had when the two conflict.

#### Dedication

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Anything for a casualty | +4/-4 |
| Dedicated               | +2/-2 |
| Caring                  | 0/0   |
| Callous                 | -2/+2 |
| Self-serving            | -4/+4 |

#### Shenley ERT

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Lifeblood of the team | +4/-4 |
| Got my buddies' backs | +2/-2 |
| We've got this!       | 0/0   |
| Untrusted             | -2/+2 |
| Mutual disdain        | -4/+4 |

### Ties

All PCs should share the "Shenley ERT" tie, representing the commitment to the ERT job and crew. PCs could well have additional ties to friends, family, other commitments, or even the GEO.

#### Shenley ERT

Connection: Dedicated team member

Obligation: Go on emergency calls, train and prepare in good faith, or be disciplined, fired or even prosecuted.

### Resources

The ERT uses three main vehicles: The *Bradwell Abbey*, a 20m hydrofoil, the *Glass Ghoul*, a long-range seaplane, and the *Emerson Valley*, a 8m rescue submarine (which can also function as a hyperbaric chamber). Both the *Bradwell Abbey* and the *Glass Ghoul* are capable of carrying the *Emerson Valley* to emergency scenes. All the vehicles are capable of remote operation and have capable autopilots, able to keep station and approach scenes when called. In other words, there's no need to have a PC babysit a vehicle and therefore be left out of the action.

The *Bradwell Abbey* and the *Glass Ghoul* have one autodoc and most other items in the Medical, Life Support and Survival sections (page XX). Both vehicles also have a range of drones and remotes to support search and rescue operations.

While the ERT's equipment list may look good on paper, supplies and spare parts are constant problems. The vehicles require a lot of servicing to keep operational. Some crucial piece of equipment is always failing, about to fail or has just failed. The ERT often has to call in favors from other Shenley residents for parts, repairs or transport, or have equipment shipped out from Haven on private vessels.

## Themes

### Heroes

ERT members are unequivocally the "good guys": they repeatedly risk their own lives for the good of others, for nothing more tangible than a civil servant's paycheck. Characters should be motivated by duty, moral obligation or perhaps adrenaline, but never riches. Rescues are dangerous and the lives of the victims and the ERT members are always on the line. PCs can be harmed both physically and mentally by what happens on the job, and the team has to deal with the consequences. The average person looks up to the PCs and trusts them, but also expects them to live up to their reputation.

### Frontier Hardship

The Endeavor Islands are the frontier of the frontier. The few thousand inhabitants of Shenley is the largest concentration of people in the hemisphere. The lack of resources is a constant worry, with PCs struggling to get the supplies and parts they need. PCs will often have to improvise around equipment that's not working or on the edge of failure. Characters have no choice but to deal with situations themselves, with their chain of command too distant to support or judge their actions. This gives characters unique freedom and responsibility.

### Everyday Life

The ERT is not constantly reacting to emergencies. They spend time drilling and practicing, touring outlying camps, providing medical services, moving supplies on the GEO's behalf, and attempting to convince prospectors of the wisdom in safety standards. Meanwhile, rifts between team members may need patching as other relationships may deepen. PCs will likely help out around Shenley. Medics are likely to work in the town's clinic. Firefighters can use their knowledge to help with construction. Engineers can help in the repair shop or bioplastics plant. These side jobs help connect the team to their community.

### Running Rescue Scenes

Rescue scenes should be as tense, dynamic, and high-stakes as any combat scene. It helps to identify which elements of the situation are making things worse (the Threats) and which are at risk (the Victims). Threats could be, for example, a fire, the holes in a boat's hull, or the ongoing blood loss from an injury. Victims are people, but also boats in danger of sinking, buildings collapsing, and faulty equipment failing.

It's often helpful to remember that the PCs are much more competent at rescue than the players. The PCs have extensive training and experience in rescues, and have drilled in

how to handle most situations. Moderators should not penalize players for not knowing the skills their characters certainly do. Even if the PCs understand the scene, they'll still be faced with impossible choices of who to save, and will still have to gamble on bold and decisive action..

## Hooks

### Sunken Sub

The prospecting submarine *Wymbush* is in trouble 1200m down, far too deep for rescue divers. A leaking seal shorted the batteries, causing a fire and power loss. The miners plugged the leak, but not before the main compartment filled with opaque, corrosive smoke; the fire has consumed most of the oxygen and will reignite if any is added, and the batteries will continue burning even if submerged. One miner is dead in the main compartment. Two others are sealed in the pilot's bubble, frightened and running out of air, and the only way to them is via the sub's main compartment.

Fixer had invested most of their savings in the *Wymbush*'s: the Long John deposit they've found could pay off handsomely. They're desperate that the location of the seam be kept secret, but other prospectors will pay good money for the ERTs navigation logs.

### Collapse

Soft ground, insufficient materials, then a storm collapsed a partially-built apartment block in Shenley, injuring workers and trapping several inside. They are in a basement that is rapidly filling with water and heavy equipment is needed to get them out. But the only route for the equipment is over another trapped worker. The whole structure is unstable and the surrounding ground is treacherous.

Half of Shenley has shown up to help in the rescue, crowding the scene and getting in the ERT's way. They'll have to manage the crowds and organize the help of other construction workers.

### Wracked

The *Willen*, a prospecting support ship, is caught in a growing storm. The prospecting sub on deck breaks free, damaging the hull and crushing the legs of one of the crew; it's still swinging, causing more damage and endangering anyone who gets close. The *Willen* is also taking on water; if the ERT can't stem the flow, they'll have to evacuate the *Willen*. Its captain appears to have been washed overboard.

Access to the *Willen* is difficult. The sea is too rough for the *Emerson Valley* to land. If the *Bradwell Abbey* comes alongside, both boats will be damaged by the waves smashing them together.

When the ERT arrives, the crew of a fishing boat are on scene, trying to help. Given good directions, they're an asset, but it quickly becomes clear they're sunburst poachers.

## Crackdown

Magistrate Shore visits Shenley, accompanied by Marshal Law Dog. Law Dog takes the opportunity to raid a glitter-making operation in the Fenny End. Arrests are made, but not before a fire breaks out in the shack and some barrels of organic solvents explode. There are a couple of prospectors still inside, with gunshot wounds and burns, holed up by Law Dog's team. If the fire progresses, more chemicals will cause lethally poison gas to engulf the town, and the fire has already spread to some nearby shacks.

Some of Law Dog's team are prowling around Fenny End, hunting for glitter refiners. A few of the dealers are hunting the Marshal. Dr Bos (page XX) e is trying to keep them separated, but there could well be conflicts.

If the fire's not controlled, it could rage across Fenny End, destroying everything. Will the ERT have to pull down homes to make firebreaks? Can the team convert the *Glass Ghoul* into a water bomber?