

## **ACTIVIST TRAINING MANUAL: FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **The aim of this chapter**

This chapter of the manual is to provide an understanding of the underlying principles of photography and instruction on the use of photographic and video camera equipment. It will also cover the various uses photo and video can have in support of the issues you are concerned with, as well as interview technique and evidence gathering.

This chapter is divided into 12 key sections:

### **Section 1: The camera as a campaign and research tool**

- 1.1 Why is video and photo useful?
- 1.2 What do you need to capture?

### **Section 2: Shooting video: what you need to tell a story**

- 2.1 Planning your shot list

### **Section 3: Principles of photography**

### **Section 4: Composition, shot choice and lighting**

### **Section 5: Working with dslr - canon 6d**

- 5.1 basic functions
- 5.2 lenses
- 5.3 shooting handheld

### **Section 6: Recording audio**

- 6.1 external audio recorders

### **Section 7: Shooting on mobile**

### **Section 8: Hidden cameras and covert filming**

### **Section 9: Drones**

### **Section 10: Filming at sea**

### **Section 11: Protecting identities**

- 11.1 informed consent

## **Section 12: Interview questioning**

- 12.1 How to ask questions
- 12.2 What to ask
- 12.3 Interviewing victims

## **Section 14: Maintaining your kit**

## **Section 15: Secure media storage and organisation**

## SECTION 1: THE CAMERA AS A CAMPAIGN AND RESEARCH TOOL

### 1.1 Why is video and photo useful?

Photo and video can and do change the world, and are part of a truly international language, crossing national, cultural and linguistic boundaries. By attracting the interest of the media, public, civil society groups, politicians and policy makers, photographs and visual images can be used to generate local, national and international action.

- Photographs and video can provide irrefutable proof of a problem or crime, such as illegal logging or illegal fishing for example.
- They can help to show who is causing a problem and how, as well as what the impact is on people, wildlife and the environment.
- Video and photos allow irrefutable evidence from an isolated village to be shared with the world's power centres instantly.
- Photos can be used to bring an issue to life, making it interesting and understandable to others including those who are not directly affected by the issue you are working on. A good photo can evoke strong interest and emotions that can work to gain support for your campaign among the different audiences you want to reach.
- Photographs and the interest they generate can be used to gain extra or new funding to help you continue to develop your campaign.

### 1.2 What do you need to capture?

The key factor in deciding what range and type of images you need is the story you want to tell. Capture a variety of images and try to cover all the bases and ensure you can tell the whole story visually. This should include images to show **what** is happening, by **whom** and **why**.

Ask the following questions and try and get photos and video to illustrate each aspect:

- What are the problems? What impact is this having on people and the environment?
- What will be the impact if a project (for example, a palm oil plantation project) goes ahead?
- How do the people and wildlife live now? What does the land look like?
- Who is causing the problem or what will the problems be?
- How are they doing it?
- Why are they doing it?
- What can be done to solve the problem?

### **Example**

If you know a company is causing problems to wildlife and people because of illegal fishing methods try to answer the following questions in your photograph and video.

#### *What are the problems and their impact?*

Shoot the people and communities who have lost their livelihoods; show damage to nets; show depleted catches.

#### *How did the people and wildlife live before the problems began?*

Visit a community that has not been affected by illegal fishing and take positive images of families, fishermen, children, wildlife and landscapes.

#### *Who is doing it and how?*

Can you document the illegal fishing as it happens? Can you get shots of the company headquarters or vehicles? Is it possible to photograph documents e.g. company reports, contracts or export licences?

#### *Why are they doing it?*

Get shots of the product – are fish being caught for export? Can you get shots of factories? Boxes or containers of fish? Tins or fresh fish for sale in shops or markets?

#### *What are the solutions?*

Take positive images of local communities that are NOT impacted by illegal fishing. What about sustainable uses of the resource (such as small-scale fishing) which may bring wider benefits to more people?

## SECTION 2: SHOOTING VIDEO: WHAT YOU NEED TO TELL A STORY

### **2.1 Planning your shot list**

A shot-list is an extremely useful part of the planning and execution of any shoot. It allows you to consider what you will need to tell your story ahead of time, then can be used as a checklist to tick off shots as you capture them (see example shot-list below4).

Think about how the story will be told in the edit and draft your shot list accordingly. It does not need to be exhaustive and you should remain flexible and reactive when you are shooting in the field.

Your advocacy goals should steer your decision making at all times - what do you need to capture to reach and compel your audience to act?

SHOTLIST: COTTON PRODUCTION IN INDIA			
SUBJECT	SHOT TYPE	LOCATION	NOTES
Pesticide mixing	Medium shot (MS)	Yavatmal	
Pesticide spraying	Close ups (CU), MS	Yavatmal	
Chemical bottles	CU	Yavatmal	
Cotton picking	Wide shots (WS) showing fields, slow tracking of pickers, CU of cotton being picked	Mysore	Wide drone shots, tracking drone shots
Cotton growing in fields	WS of fields in bloom, CU of cotton on plants, Low WS through cotton plants	Mysore	Time-lapse (dawn/dusk)
Cotton processing	WS of packing and processing, CU of bundles and finished product	Pollachi	
Logistics	Cotton being processed into bales etc	Pollachi	Various

## Interviews

Interviews are often vital in allowing you to tell a story. They can bring first-hand testimony to a film, explain a complex issue in an engaging way, or give background on a person or topic.

## B-roll

B-roll is material that you can cut away from the main shot to. It's useful when editing interviews to hide cuts you wish to make for brevity or messaging and to illustrate points made by your interviewee.

When you're shooting an interview, consider what B-roll you will need to illustrate what the interviewee is saying. If the interviewee is talking about pesticide spraying, try to document this to show your audience directly.

## SECTION 3: PRINCIPLES OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Light is critical to your photos and video. Too much light and the image will look pale and washed-out; too little and it will be dark with detail lost. Light can also affect the way in which the image is viewed, for example by creating atmosphere. The most important aspect of capturing good video and photos is getting to know your equipment and understanding why it works the way it does.

### Exposure

Exposure refers to the amount of light that reaches the sensor in your camera. It is controlled by balancing three variables - ISO, aperture, and shutter speed. If you are using a DSLR, exposure is indicated by a light-meter (figure 1) you can see through the viewfinder. The needle on your light meter should be middle, indicating that you are not under or over exposed and have the correct balance of light in your shot.

Figure 1





## ISO

ISO refers to the sensitivity of the sensor to light. It is rated between 100 and 25,600 or higher, depending on the camera. The image will become brighter as you increase the ISO. However, the higher the ISO, the more digital 'noise' (coloured, grainy specks in the shadows and midtones) will be introduced to the image (figure 2). For this reason, cameras perform best and deliver cleaner images at lower ISO ratings.

Figure 2



## Shutter speed

The shutter speed refers to the period of time that the curtain between the sensor and the rear element of the lens is open and letting light onto the camera. Shutter speed is measured in fractions of a second.

The longer the shutter is open for, the more light is allowed to reach the sensor and the brighter the image will be. However, if the subject of the photograph or the camera capturing

the image are in motion, a fast shutter speed is necessary for a sharp image. If the shutter speed is too slow, the image will be blurred (figure 3).

Figure 3



### **Aperture**

The aperture is an adjustable opening inside the lens that regulates the amount of light reaching the sensor. Aperture is measured in f-stops - the lower the f-stop, the larger the aperture and the more light hitting the sensor (and the brighter the image).

The f-stop also affects the 'depth of field'. This refers to the area between the nearest and farthest object that is in focus in an image (see figure 4). The lower the f-stop, the more 'shallow' the depth of field is. This effect is more pronounced at short range. For example, f/1.8 will allow plenty of light into the sensor and produce a shallow depth of field.



Figure 4



#### **The Golden rules**

- ▀ These three elements – ISO, aperture, and shutter speed – must be balanced to correctly expose your image.
- ▀ You should also consider how depth of field (controlled by aperture), motion blur (controlled by shutter speed), and digital noise (controlled by ISO) will affect your image.

## SECTION 4: COMPOSITION, SHOT CHOICE AND LIGHTING

### Composition

Composition refers to how objects are arranged within the frame. Look through the camera and think about what you can see and what the view would mean to other people who have no other information about the issue, the people or the place.

Traditionally, photographers and filmmakers tend to compose images using the 'rule of thirds' to compose shots. This involved dividing the frame into thirds horizontally and vertically and splitting the objects or divisions in the frame along these imaginary lines (see figure 5).

Try to position objects at the intersections of the lines (red dots shown in figures 5 and 6). Remember, this is a guide rather than a hard and fast rule. Sometimes capturing the action will take priority over perfect rule of thirds framing.

Most cameras allow you to display a 3x3 grid over the monitor or viewfinder image to assist with composition.

Figure 5

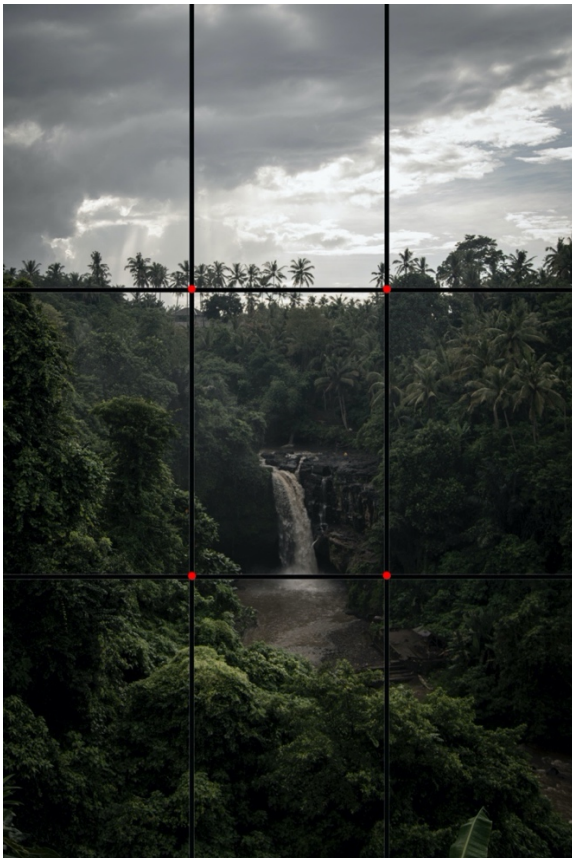


Figure 6



### Shot choice

If you're shooting video, you will need to capture a range of shots to tell your story, as discussed above.

- Wide shots establish your location - try to include details that achieve this. Think about movement within the frame (e.g. traffic, boats passing, people walking) as well as camera movement (e.g. slow pan or tilt).
- Medium/long shots can be used to introduce a character and show them in a relevant location.
- Close ups shots to show detail or heightened emotion in a character.

By varying shot choice and making sure you have a range of angles and close/medium/wide shots, you can ensure there will be enough material to edit your story.

## Capturing people

People can often make an image more interesting. But they can also confuse an image, distracting the viewer from the real subject. If a person/group is not a part of the desired shot then try and take it without them there. You may do this by moving your own position or by politely asking people to move whilst you get your shot.

People may be shy or not want to be filmed or photographed – again, ask politely, be respectful of people’s privacy and don’t push your camera into their faces. Be sensitive; for example, don’t photograph people eating or at prayer unless you are given permission.

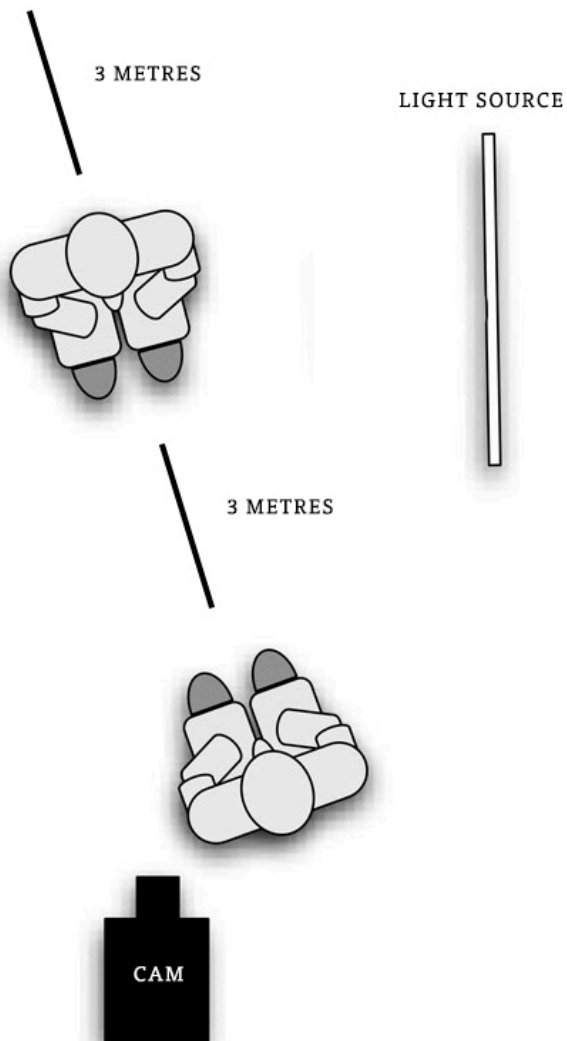
## Interview setup and composition

Try to arrive at the location before your interviewee so have time to set up and compose your shot. Larger rooms are generally better (preferably with some soft furnishings like sofas and carpets to avoid echo) to give space between the camera and the subject, and the subject and the background.

- Position chairs facing each other, with the camera (mounted on a tripod), behind and to one side of the interviewer/translator (figure 7).
- Set the camera up around 3m from the subject, and at their eye level.
- Ideally, they should be at least 3m from the background.
- Try not to have a window in the background and do not sit the subject in the corner of a room.
- If you have two cameras, shoot a close up and a wide shot. This will allow you cut between the two to pick out pertinent parts of the interview without using B-roll to cut away.
- Compose your shot using the rule of thirds. Regardless of how tight the shot is, position the middle of the interviewee’s face approximately on the upper intersections of the horizontal and vertical lines.
- Focus on your subject’s eyes and check throughout the interview that they are still in focus. If your DSLR has facial recognition Auto Focus, this can be useful to turn on if you're operating two cameras or asking questions.
- Shoot your primary camera at around f4 - this depth of field will allow them to remain in focus if they move around. You could shoot a second camera with tighter framing at around f2. Monitor this carefully as the depth of field will be very shallow.
- Offset the subject slightly to the left or right of the frame with their eyeline about two thirds of the way up.

- Allow some headroom above the interviewee unless it's a very tight shot (figure 8).

Figure 7





**Figure 8**



### **Interview lighting**

Using lights for filmed interviews can lift your subject from the background and provide depth and texture. However, if you don't feel confident using artificial lighting or you don't have lights to hand, natural light can also work well.

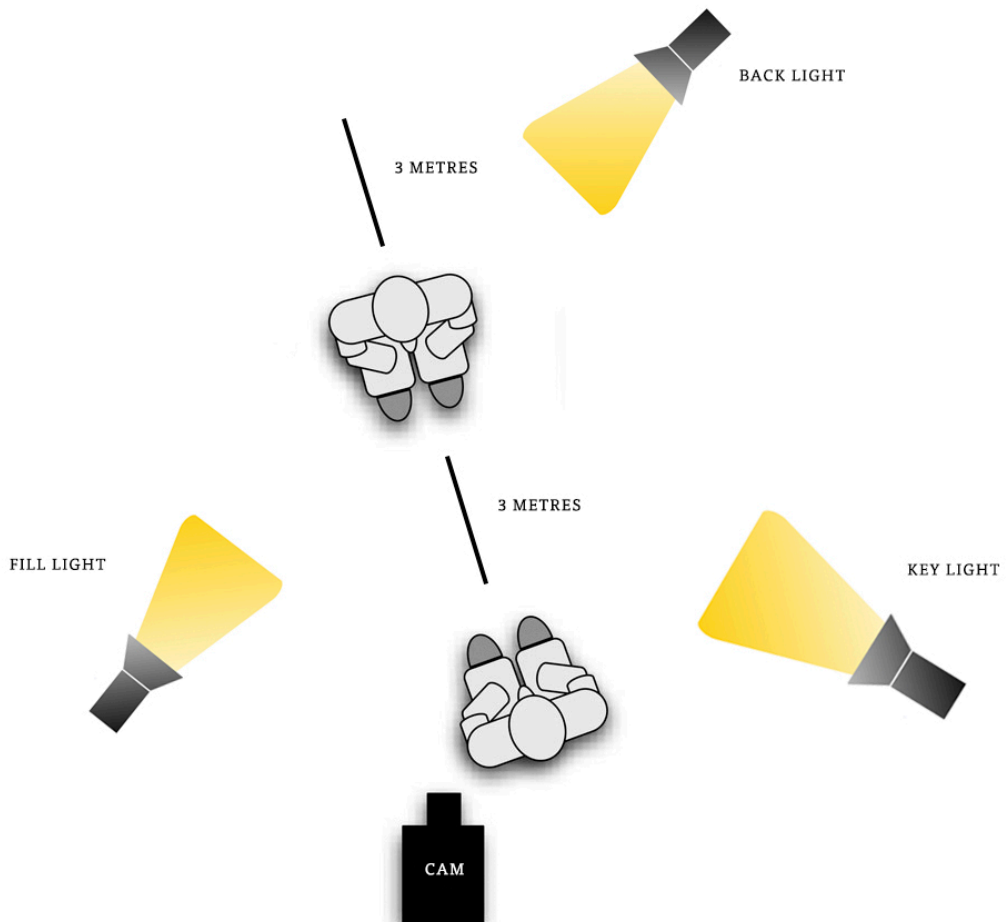
- Try to have light falling across half of the interviewees face to lend some texture (figure 9). But don't over-do the contrast, unless that's a look you want to achieve.
- Lighting position depends on the number of lights you have and the space you are in. Ideally you want three lights - a key light, a fill light and a backlight (figure 10)



Figure 9



Figure 10



It won't always be possible to arrange the lights like this, sometimes you'll just have a key light, sometimes you will have to make do with natural light.

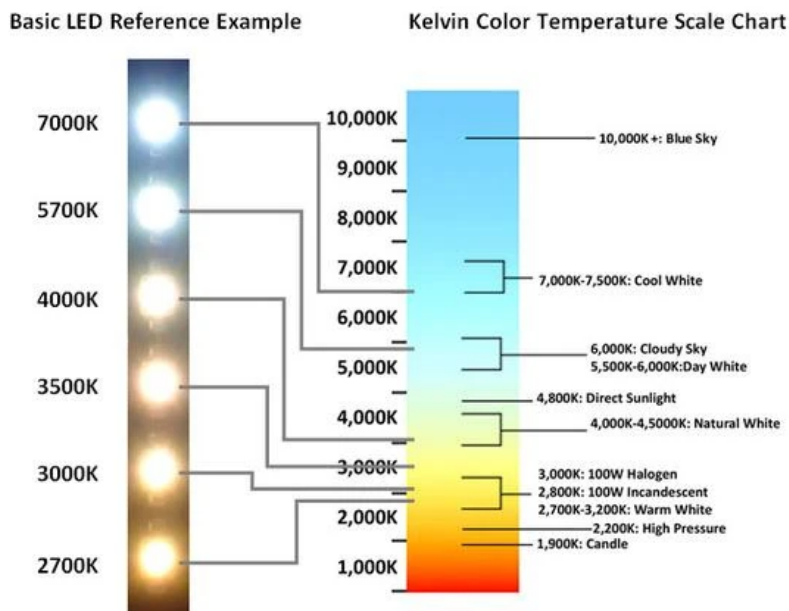
## Colour temperature

Colour temperature refers to the warmth or coolness of light and is expressed in kelvins (K) (figure 11). Cooler light is more 'blueish' (above 5,000K) while warmer light is more orange (below 5,000K).

**TIP:** Sunrise and sunset produce the best light for photography and video (around 3,000K). The light is soft and warm - there is *some* contrast but not too much. Try to shoot scenes at these times wherever possible.

Strong sunlight produces images with lots of contrasts and can be challenging to work with. Artificial light also has a temperature value. Tungsten lights give off a warmer, more orange light, while fluorescent lights tend to be more white/blue. Some lights allow you to adjust the colour temperature.

Figure 11



## General lighting considerations

Try to position the light source behind you and so it is falling on the subject of the shot. If it's in front of you, you will struggle to expose the shot correctly.

## SECTION 5: WORKING WITH DSLR - CANON 6D

SLRs are hugely versatile. They shoot video and photos, have interchangeable lenses, are small and light, and allow you to remain relatively inconspicuous. They do have their limitations however, but these can be overcome with practice and familiarity.

This section looks at the 6D but all Canon SLRs have similar functions and button layout.

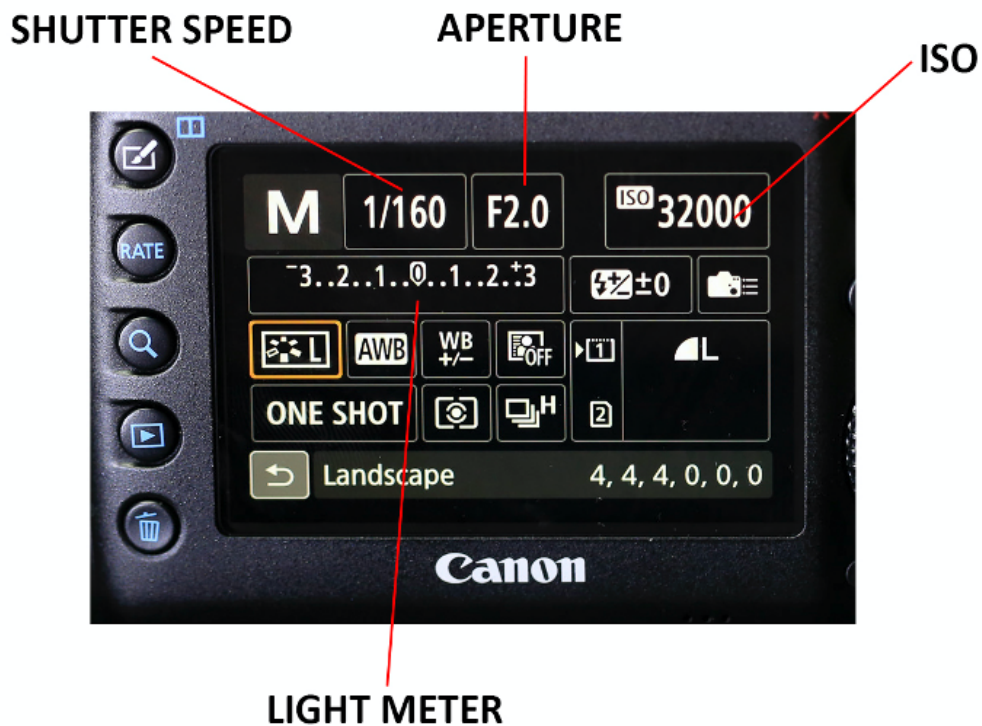
### 5.1 Basic functions





- Turn on the camera at the **Power Switch**, then make sure a memory card is inserted into the **Memory Card Slot**.
- To format the memory card, press the **Menu** button, scroll right along the top to the fifth icon and select **FORMAT CARD**.
- Using the **Setting Selection Dial**, set the camera to **MANUAL (M)**.
- Select **Video mode** and the image will be displayed on the LCD screen.
- **ZOOM** and **FOCUS** can be controlled by their respective rings on the lens. **AF** (Automatic Focus) can be switched ON or OFF on the side of the lens.
- Choose **ISO SENSITIVITY** by pressing the **ISO button** and scrolling with the **Main dial**. Try and keep this as low as possible. Remember - a higher ISO will result in a brighter, but grainier image.
- **SHUTTER SPEED** can be set by **Main dial**
- **APERTURE SIZE** can be set by **Quick control dial**.
- The light meter on the LCD Monitor will display the current light balance as you change the settings, semi-depress the **shutter release** in order to see the light balance.
- Combine the ISO, shutter speed and aperture size so that the image is neither too dark, nor overexposed.
- Make sure you are recording 1920x1080 25p.
- Though your DSLR will record audio, it will be low quality. So you would usually use a separate recorder, such as a Zoom h5.





## 5.2 Lenses

Your lens choice makes a big difference to the kind of image you will capture. Professional photography lenses are expensive but produce sharp, high quality images. Use the best lenses you have access to.

‘Focal length’, measured in millimetres, refers to the level of magnification the lens is capable of. The greater the length, the higher the magnification. E.g. a 300mm lens will allow you to view objects at a great distance, whereas a 16mm lens will give you a very wide field of view.

Some lenses have a fixed focal length, whereas some allow you to zoom. A good all-round zoom lens is a 24-105mm - this gives you a good range of focal lengths in a relatively small package without having to change lenses.

A longer lens (e.g. 300mm) is also useful to allow you to document a scene from a safe distance. Image stabilisation is very useful for shooting handheld, and means you can use slower shutter speeds while keeping your shots sharp (if your subject is stationary).



### **Tripods**

To avoid blurring your photos when using either a slow shutter speed (e.g. in dark conditions) or a long lens (which will magnify any camera shake), you can use a tripod.

- ▣ Beware that using slow shutter speeds can cause blurring if your subject moves whilst the shutter is open.
- ▣ Look through the viewfinder to check that the image is level and make adjustments as you would if you were holding the camera in your hands.
- ▣ Always ensure that the camera is firmly attached to the plate on the top of the tripod and cannot fall off.

### **5.3 Shooting handheld**

- Hold the camera firmly with both hands and have the strap around your neck. Pull against the strap to provide tension and stability.
- Tuck your elbows in.
- Make sure your footing is secure and stand with your feet apart to help your balance.
- Try and lean against or sit on a steady object (wall, car) to steady your shot. If you are seated, you could try holding the camera on your lap.
- If you are kneeling down, use a raised knee to prop up the arm that is supporting the camera.
- Film low angle shots by lying down with your elbows resting firmly on the ground.
- Filming whilst walking is difficult and not generally advisable – try keeping your knees bent and your body lowered, moving smoothly in order to avoid jarring the camera with each footstep.
- Many lenses now have an image stabilisation function which is useful when shooting handheld.

## **SECTION 6: RECORDING AUDIO**

### **6.1 External audio recorders**

An external audio recorder will give you excellent quality audio but will need to be matched with the video in the edit. A Zoom recorder (h5 or similar) will deliver good audio and is easy to use. Remember to select the channel that you have plugged your microphone into (via XLR cable) then adjust so the level is around -12db at the loudest point.

Set the audio level by asking your interviewee to speak about something unrelated to the interview - what did they have to eat so far today, for example. Remember that your subject may speak louder (or quieter) in the actual interview than they do in the soundcheck - especially if they become agitated or are speaking passionately.

So, check your levels often and **always** monitor your audio with headphones. If you hear the audio distort and see the levels peak and the red light will flash, you need to turn your levels down.

## 6.2 Interview audio

Clear audio is crucial. If you're shooting an interview, use a lapel mic if you have one. Clip the mic above the middle of the chest and hide the cable beneath clothing as best you can.

Listen to the room - can you hear air conditioners, music, people talking? If so, try to eliminate these disturbances, they will make editing more difficult.

Monitor your audio with headphones at all times. Make sure it's not peaking and that you're not picking up clothes rustling or other interference. If you need to adjust the mic for whatever reason, stop the interview - it's preferable to stop and ask your subject to repeat something than to put up with bad audio.

**TIP:** Get 10-15 seconds of ambient room noise (no talking) when your interview is finished. This is useful to mask cuts in the edit.

## Other audio

A shotgun mic into your camera or into an external recorder (Zoom h5 or similar) is suitable for most audio recording applications. Think about what audio you will need in your edit - e.g. waves, forest, market, traffic - most of this can be found online but it's preferable to record your own. Remember not to speak over your shots so as to get clean audio.

## 6.3 Recording voiceover

Voiceover is an economic way of communicating complex concepts, but should be carefully considered - can you communicate the same information with interviews? Or text on-screen? Or a variety of all three?

- Use the best mic you have access to, preferably a condenser mic.
- Stand 6 inches from the mic and speak clearly and **slowly** (this may feel unnatural, but it's important to take your time). Have your script in front of you to read from.

- Wear headphones to monitor the sound and test your voice at the loudest you will read.
- Do a few takes of each sentence so you have options in the edit.

## SECTION 7: SHOOTING ON MOBILE

Shooting on a phone involves many of the same considerations as a high-end video camera. Think about and plan your shots, vary your framing and shot-choices to cover all bases, and think carefully about lighting and composition.

- Shoot in landscape orientation (horizontally)
- Hold your phone steady and get 15-20s of each shot before moving on.
- Think about audio on your phone - you'll need to be close to the source for best results.
- Make deliberate, smooth movements, keeping your elbows close to your body for stability.
- If you have to walk or run while recording, move from the knees to keep your torso steady and your shot smoother.

### INTERVIEW CHECKLIST SETUP

- Check card is in camera, formatted and battery charged. Keep lens caps on for as long as possible.
  - Firmly secure tripod plate and set up camera at eye level with subject. Spread tripod legs wide to maintain stability.
  - Position the subject around 10 feet from the camera and at least 8 feet from the background (not a window)
  - Set ISO (as low as possible), aperture (between f3.5 and f5.6) then expose correctly using shutter speed (a multiple of 25 ideally)
  - Frame the shot with the subject's eyes at 2/3 horizontally
  - Sit to one side of the camera and leave negative space for the subject to speak into
- Zoom in and focus on the eyes (manual focus), then zoom out and reframe.

### PRESS RECORD

### AUDIO

- Clip lav mic between buttons or somewhere discreet, hide the wire.
- Turn on the Zoom recorder and make sure input is set to '1'.

- Prime the recorder by pressing the REC button once (the red light will flash)
- Set levels by asking the subject an unrelated question (what did you have for breakfast?) and adjusting the up/down level while monitoring with headphones.
- Keep below -12db to avoid peaking
- Remember to press the REC button again to begin recording (solid red light)

ALSO...

- Always obtain informed consent and a signed release form
- Listen for background noise (planes, sirens, traffic). Don't be afraid to stop the subject and ask them to repeat something if noise interrupts
- Ask for a subject's name (spelling anything unusual) and have them speak in full sentences.

QUESTIONS

- When? Where? How long? How much? Why is it important? How did it make you feel? (Try to elicit an emotional response)
- Don't ask YES/NO or leading questions
- Nod and smile to encourage the subject but don't 'ah' or 'hmm' (same for translator)
- Listen carefully, take notes and log interesting details for B-roll ideas
- Get some shots of your subject doing something relevant (i.e. fisherman – shots of them around a boat, pulling nets, etc)
- Leave your contact info when the interview is over

## SECTION 8: HIDDEN CAMERAS AND COVERT FILMING

### Identity/hidden cams & audio

Think carefully about whether you need to use hidden recording devices and only do so if there are no other alternatives. What will happen if you are caught filming covertly? Could there be a violent response? Is it worth the risk?

Lie as little as possible. It's hard to maintain a lie under scrutiny and easy to get caught out. Don't volunteer unnecessary information that you have not been asked about and is untrue.

Test your kit and make sure you understand how it works before starting. Don't keep checking the camera/recorder once you have started recording - set it recording then let it run. If

you've done your tests, you should be able to trust your kit. Start the recording beforehand in a secure location (e.g. in your vehicle).

Think about angles and field of view - how do you need to angle your watch cam/glasses cam/button cam to ensure you're getting the shot you want? Testing is crucial.

**TIP:** Audio is often more important than visuals - make sure this is clear. Consider wearing a separate audio recorder if that's an option.

## SECTION 9: DRONES

### **Applications**

Drones can be invaluable for scouting locations, documenting infractions from a safe distance and capturing beautifully cinematic shots. They are not so useful for capturing detail and understanding complicated scenes that may not make sense from above. They supplement other information gathering techniques, they do not replace them.

### **Limitations**

Using a drone where they are prohibited can be dangerous and land you in serious trouble with authorities. Think about whether the shot you are trying to get is worth the risk. Can you get the shot another way? What does the drone add?

Drones are loud, even at height. Be aware that if you may attract attention by using a drone. You are especially conspicuous during take-off and landing, which can often attract large crowds of onlookers.

## SECTION 10: FILMING AT SEA

Investigations at sea throw up their own very specific challenges and safety considerations. You should never go to sea without a competent local guide, necessary safety equipment and completion of a full risk assessment.

### **Documenting illegal activity at sea**

- Wear dark clothes to shoot at night

- Make sure you get the vessel names/IMO/IDs with geotagged photos - do this before shooting video. Preferably have one member of your team dedicated to shooting photographs.
- If safe, have the navigation lights turned off and/or shoot from inside a cabin.
- When shooting video, try to get a stable shot for at least 10s - hold your breath, brace yourself in a door frame or against a fixed structure, and bring the camera into your body.
- If it's difficult to get a stable shot, shoot wider. Try to use a stabilised lens.
- In a rough sea, you will get stable shots at the apex of the swing when the boat is momentarily stationary - take photos at these points.
- Push the ISO if necessary - it's better to have a grainy shot than be underexposed.
- Turn on the GPS in camera, set time and date for your location.
- Use lens hoods to keep the spray off. Check regularly for spray on the front element of lens and use alcohol wipes and a microfibre cloth to clean and dry your lens.
- Change lenses inside the cabin if possible or keep the camera body away from the wind when the lens is off. Shield it with your body and keep it pointed down. Wipe down cameras and lenses when you're back from sea, even if they're not noticeably wet.
- Make sure you can communicate quickly and clearly with the captain - have a translator between you if necessary. If you can, brief the crew beforehand.
- Try to make one slow pass of the vessel you are documenting to get the shots you need. Review stills there and then to be sure you have the shot.

### **General considerations**

Pack for all weathers and for longer than you plan to be out (i.e. extra food and water), if in any doubt, insist on taking more fuel than you are told you will need. Be aware of moving machinery, hooks, ropes, especially if you are boarding a fishing vessel. Watch your fingers on the edge of the boat. Take seasickness pills if needed, drink water, wear sunscreen and wear a hat.



### If you fall in:

- Try to control your breathing. If it's choppy, cover your mouth and nose with your hands to avoid taking in water.
- The best way to float is to recline flat on your back with your head above water. Arch your back, extend your arms to the side and let your legs float up in an extended position.
- Don't try to swim if you're far offshore. Wave and shout – you need to attract the attention of the vessel you fell from.

### If someone else falls in:

- Immediately shout to stop the boat and point at the person overboard. Keep pointing at them until they are back in the boat. Do not lose sight of them, do not stop pointing.
- Come around to the man overboard and very slowly approach them (preferably using the wind or current to drift onto their position – cut the engine before you reach them). If you have a life ring or similar, throw it to them. If not, grab them and pull them up (this may require two people).
- Get them warmed up fast – use a survival blanket or any other insulating material you may have on board and return to shore immediately.

## SECTION 11: PROTECTING IDENTITIES

Your first priority is to ensure that sources will not come to any harm because they have interacted with you. By speaking to you, sources and contributors may be putting themselves at risk. **Their safety is always of the utmost importance.**

Can your contributor be identified by what they say, what they're wearing or their accent? Never release information, footage or photographs that could put someone at risk, even if you have their express consent to do so.

### 11.1 Informed consent

Before you begin a recorded interview, explain to your sources who you are, what your objectives are and what you will be using the information they give you for. This is **informed consent**.

Are they aware of where your footage will be distributed? Make sure they have given fully informed consent and understand the following:

- Who you are
- The purpose of the interview
- The implications of speaking on camera
- How the footage will be used and who could see it
- That participation is voluntary and there will be no payment
- That their identity (visual or voice) can be obscured and their name withheld or changed if they wish
- That they can take a break or stop the interview at any time

Some individuals will need special consideration (children, those with mental disabilities, survivors of trauma) and permission should be sought from a legal guardian before you interview them.

If you fail to obtain fully informed consent, your methods could be called into question and the validity of your evidence and overall campaign could be undermined. It could also have consequences for your contributors if they do not fully understand the consequences of their participation in your project.

**If you are filming an anonymous interview:**

1. Be sure that you have sufficiently protected the interviewee's identity. Do they have jewellery, tattoos, scars or injuries that might reveal their identity?
2. Be sure that there are no clues in the background of your interview shot that might reveal the interviewee's identity. This could include signposts, local landmarks or vehicle registration details. This applies to supplementary footage that you might collect before or after the interview - If in doubt, leave it out.

**Obscuring identities**

There are a range of ways that you can obscure identities. The subject could be out of focus or heavily backlit, you could just shoot their hands, or you could obscure them in the edit with pixilation or exposure adjustment. You may need to modify their voice if they wish (make clear that this option is open to them).

**REMEMBER** the existence of media showing the identity of your contributor puts them at risk. Until this media is stored securely, they are vulnerable.

## SECTION 12: INTERVIEW QUESTIONING

### **Before you begin**

Start by reassuring the contributor that their testimony will be edited, so they can repeat or rephrase their answers as they like.

Make them feel at ease by talking with them before you start recording - it doesn't have to be about the topic you wish to eventually examine. If you can start the camera rolling at this stage, you erode the boundary between the interview and the conversation, which will make it easier for the contributor to speak openly.

Be relaxed and friendly with your contributor - never let them see you panicked or anxious. For example, if your audio recorder is not working, troubleshoot the problem calmly without letting on that there is an issue. The contributor will be anxious enough and your stress will not help them relax.

### **12.1 How to ask questions**

Don't ask questions that give 'yes or no' answers - ask open ended questions to encourage a more detailed response: 'Tell me about...', 'Describe to me...', 'Can you talk about...'. Don't ask leading questions or put words in the mouth of your interviewee. Listen carefully - your interviewee's responses should shape your follow up questions.

Try to encourage the interviewee to include the question in their answer so that you can use it in the edit without the question. E.g. Q 'What's your name?' A 'My name is Mary'.

Respond to the interviewee with non-verbal cue (nodding etc) – be careful not to say 'uh-huh' while they are speaking as this will come through in the audio.

Don't always jump to your next question when your interviewee has finished speaking - if you leave a silence, sometimes they will fill it with more detail or more information. It's also useful when editing to have silence between interactions.

Don't assume anything. Ask for clarification, follow up on every detail, even if it seems obvious to you. What you think of as pertinent may not be in the mind of your interviewee.

## 12.2 What to ask

You have limited time with an interviewee before they become impatient or fatigued. Use it wisely by asking only relevant and revealing questions.

Start with an introduction then ask some background questions - how long have they lived here/worked as a fisherman etc.

- Ask for dates, witnesses, details, etc. Then ask follow-up questions to clarify.
- Ask about how events made them feel or how they responded when they learned about the issue at hand.
- Detail is crucial - what was the vessel called, what was the company called, do you have copies of paperwork/contracts, who was present, etc
- If you need to ask multiple questions to understand a single point, ask the interview to repeat what they have told you in a whole sentence.

**TIP:** Always finish with, 'Is there anything else you would like to tell me or anything you don't feel we have covered?'

## 12.3 Interviewing victims

The experiences that the interviewee is describing could be deeply traumatic and you have an obligation to treat them sensitively and with care. Do not push the line of questioning if it is making the interviewee uncomfortable or visibly upset. Offer to take a break at any time.

If you are asking about traumatic experiences, make it clear that you wish to talk about this before you begin. Be certain that what you are asking is of importance to the story and the investigation and not for your own curiosity.

Always leave your contact details and if possible, get a copy of the finished film to your contributors, if they wish to see it.

## SECTION 13: REVIEWING YOUR WORK

Think about what went well, what went wrong and what you could do to improve it. You can review the settings you used in the metadata of your photos and video. Think about what you might do differently if you were to re-do the shot. Ask for feedback and advice.

### Example

Look at this image and the settings used to capture it. Why do you think it has turned out the way it has? What would you do differently?



**Aperture: f.4**  
**Shutter: 1/15**  
**ISO: 200**

## SECTION 14: MAINTAINING YOUR KIT

Use a kit inventory to keep track of the kit you have. This is also a useful checklist to run through before you leave for a shoot. Make sure your kit is clean and ready to go at all times - batteries should be charged, cards ready, and kit well packed.

Store your kit in a clean, dust free environment away from direct sunlight. You may wish to keep a silica gel pack in your kit if you're in a humid environment. While you're in the field, use a padded bag and keep your kit with you at all times. Use camera straps and avoid leaving the camera in direct sunlight for prolonged periods.

Clean your kit after use, especially if you have been at sea or in a dusty environment. Pack batteries in a separate compartment to your lenses and camera bodies.

**REMEMBER** to make sure you have spare cards and batteries.

## SECTION 15: SECURE MEDIA STORAGE AND ORGANISATION

### Secure storage

Have a secure location in mind where you can go to offload (and transfer) your footage, before you begin filming. Make sure you have enough space on external drives to back up your footage (ideally to two separate drives, stored in separate physical locations).

### CHECKLIST

- Backup cards from all cameras at the end of every day in the correct format
- Make sure hard drives are password protected.
- Backup from card to drive every time to avoid corrupt files being duplicated (i.e. don't copy from one drive to another)
- Split the drives between team members and if you're concerned about being stopped leaving a country, leave one with someone you trust
- If your footage puts yourself or someone else at risk and you cannot store it safely, you should delete it immediately or transfer it securely to a trusted partner or organisation, then delete it.

### Secure transfer

It's always preferable to hand over footage in person, but sometimes you will need to transfer files online. Though it's impossible to ensure total safety when transferring files online, there are tools that can help you do it as securely as possible.

- Start by encrypting your files with BitLocker or similar
- Transfer using WeTransfer.com or YouSendIt.com



## Organising your files

Good file organisation is crucial to avoid your data becoming unmanageable and time cumbersome to work with. The following folder structure (Figure 12) is useful for organising footage (rushes) and photographs (stills) by day and by camera.

Figure 12

