COMPANION GUIDE TO ONLINE TRAINING

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INT-08 | READING YOUR GROUND PATTERN OF LIFE ANALYSIS

Collect. Baseline. Detect.

Four Baseline Domains | Analytical Tools | Cascade Indicators | Reporting Products | Knowledge Checks | Worksheets | Glossary

Four Domains | Knowledge Checks | Planning Worksheets | Field Checklists | Glossary

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Semper Paratus, Semper Gumby

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INT-08 | READING YOUR GROUND

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This companion guide requires an active Patreon subscription at the Operator tier or above. It is designed to be used alongside the INT-08 Pattern of Life Analysis online lessons at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/curriculum/. This guide contains worksheets, reference tables, knowledge checks with answers, and field checklists. It does not replace the online lessons.

ONLINE TRAINING ACCESS

The INT-08 online lessons are available to Patreon subscribers at the Operator tier or above:

patreon.com/fortunefavorstheprepared

Subscribers also receive access to all printable worksheets, companion guides for the full Intelligence & HUMINT series, and PDF downloads.

HOW TO USE THIS COMPANION GUIDE

THIS GUIDE IS A COMPANION TO PATREON-GATED ONLINE TRAINING

Complete each section of the online lesson before reviewing the corresponding section here. The online lesson contains the instruction. This guide contains the reference tables, knowledge checks with answers, planning worksheets, and field checklists.

HOW TO SEQUENCE YOUR STUDY

1. Read the online lesson section in full.
2. Attempt the knowledge check on the lesson page without looking at the answers here.
3. Review the corresponding section of this guide and check your answer.
4. Complete the planning worksheets when preparing an actual collection or assessment.
5. Use the field checklists as printed references — print them and keep them accessible.

PART 1 — WHAT PATTERN OF LIFE ANALYSIS IS (AND ISN'T)

Core Definition

Pattern of Life Analysis (FM 34-2-1): The deliberate, systematic documentation of observable behaviors, patterns, and conditions across a defined environment during a defined period — establishing a baseline against which deviations can be identified, evaluated, and reported.

THE WORD THAT MATTERS: BASELINE

Pattern of life analysis is not casual observation. It is not surveillance. It is goal-directed documentation — the observer knows what environmental baseline they are building before collection begins, and they apply a structured framework to detect departures from it. Without a defined baseline, deviation analysis is impossible. You are not comparing observations against a record — you are comparing them against a feeling.

Why This Matters to Preparedness Communities

Elicitation already happens to preparedness communities. Pattern of life analysis happens to them too — but from outside, by people attempting to map their meeting locations, resource caches, membership, and operational patterns. Understanding how baselines work teaches you to recognize when your own environment is being observed.

It is also a collection tool. Communities with mature baselines produce better intelligence products — more accurate welfare reports, more reliable SITREP inputs, and faster recognition of developing threats.

ETHICAL BOUNDARY

Pattern of life analysis means documenting observable, public indicators in your community environment. It does not mean surveilling individuals, recording private activities, or targeting people who have created no legitimate security concern. The legal and ethical boundary is public observation — not targeted collection against persons.

PART 2 — THE FOUR BASELINE DOMAINS

Overview

The four domains organize the collection environment into discrete, observable categories. Each domain has defined indicators, defined collection tools, and defined thresholds for reportable deviation.

DOMAIN	WHAT IT COVERS	COLLECTION TOOL
Domain 1 — Human Activity	Resident/pedestrian movement; social gathering points; visitor patterns; behavioral indicators; welfare indicators.	Activity Register
Domain 2 — Infrastructure & Lifelines	Power, water, fuel, transportation, commercial supply. Normal outage/resupply timelines and availability trends.	Activity Register + status log
Domain 3 — Vehicle & Movement	Traffic volume on key routes; vehicle types and configurations; parking patterns; convoy or fleet indicators.	Pattern Analysis Plot Sheet
Domain 4 — Communications & Networks	Radio net traffic; cell and internet service patterns; repeater status; emergency alert frequency; silence indicators.	Activity Register + net status log

Domain 1: Human Activity Patterns

The richest and most dynamic baseline domain. The goal is not to document every individual — it is to document the rhythm of human activity at key observation points. Baseline question: what does routine human presence look like here at this time on this day of the week?

Domain 2: Infrastructure and Lifelines

Infrastructure behavior is highly predictable in stable conditions. This is precisely what makes disruptions detectable. Infrastructure maps directly to the PLN-01 Community Lifelines framework: Safety & Security; Food, Water & Shelter; Communications; Energy; Transportation; Health & Medical; Hazardous Materials.

Domain 3: Vehicle and Movement Patterns

Vehicle patterns are driven by external schedules — work shifts, school hours, commercial deliveries, government operations. Deviations are therefore both more obvious and more meaningful.

Domain 4: Communications and Networks

The most technically demanding domain to baseline, but not optional. In a degraded communications environment, detecting changes in the communications landscape is a direct operational advantage.

> **SILENCE IS INTELLIGENCE**
>
> A repeater that normally has traffic every twenty minutes going quiet for six hours is a deviation worth investigating. A net that clears unexpectedly is a signal. These are only detectable if you know what normal looks like.

SEE ALSO: INT-02 RADIO TRAFFIC SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

INT-02 covers Domain 4 in full depth — net traffic pattern reading, signal indicator analysis, and building a structured communications intelligence picture from amateur radio and GMRS traffic. Students doing both INT-02 and INT-08 are developing the same baseline from complementary angles.

PART 3 — ANALYTICAL TOOLS AND THE THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK

The Three Collection Tools

TOOL 1: THE ACTIVITY REGISTER

A time-ordered log of observations at a defined location during a defined collection period. Captures: observer ID, location, date and time, domain (H/I/V/C), count or status, behavioral notes, deviation flag. Primary domains: human activity and infrastructure/lifelines.

FIELD	WHAT TO RECORD	EXAMPLE
Observer	Initials or callsign	NM
Location	Named point or intersection	Elm / Route 9
Date / Time	24hr format, consistent timezone	2026-07-14 0715
Domain	H / I / V / C	V (vehicle)
Count / Status	Number or NORM / DEGRADE / FAIL	14 (baseline: 3–6)
Notes	Configuration, behavior, direction	Loaded pickups, eastbound
Dev Flag	Y / N	Y

TOOL 2: THE PATTERN ANALYSIS PLOT SHEET

A time-by-location matrix plotting observations across multiple collection periods to reveal volume trends, clustering, and gap patterns. Primary domains: vehicle and movement, human activity. At its simplest: a hand-drawn grid with locations across the top, time blocks down the left, and observation counts in the cells.

TOOL 3: THE EVENT TEMPLATE

A structured record documenting a specific deviation event: what was observed, when, by whom, in which domain, what baseline it deviated from, what the significance is, and what follow-on collection is warranted. Triggered by any AMBER or RED threshold crossing.

The Three-Level Deviation Threshold Framework

LEVEL	THRESHOLD	ACTION REQUIRED
NOMINAL	Within 10–15% of baseline norm	Log in Activity Register. No follow-on required.
AMBER	15–50% above or below norm, or first occurrence of unfamiliar indicator	Open Event Template. Initiate corroboration. Monitor 24–48 hours.
RED	Greater than 50% deviation, recurrence of AMBER, or concurrent multi-domain deviation	Complete Event Template. Brief MAG leadership. Evaluate for SITREP integration.

PART 4 — CASCADE INDICATORS

How Cascade Chains Work

The most significant pre-crisis signals rarely appear in a single domain in isolation. They appear first as a small deviation in one domain that triggers a predictable chain of secondary effects across others.

Cascade Chain 1: Supply Disruption

Step 1 Infrastructure: Fuel and food resupply delays detected at commercial locations.

Step 2 Human Activity: Increased purchasing behavior and crowd formation; behavioral stress indicators.

Step 3 Vehicle / Movement: Increased outbound vehicle traffic; residents traveling farther for supplies.

Step 4 Communications: Increased informal net traffic; rumors propagating; emergency alert monitoring increases.

Cascade Chain 2: Civil Unrest Onset

Step 1 Communications: Unusual traffic on local nets; coordination chatter; silence from normally-active community groups.

Step 2 Human Activity: Group formation at non-standard times and locations; reduction in normal pedestrian traffic.

Step 3 Vehicle / Movement: Convoy activity; unusual vehicle configurations; law enforcement pre-positioning.

Step 4 Infrastructure: Selective business closures; fuel and ATM depletion; utility service disruptions.

Cascade Chain 3: Infrastructure Failure

Step 1 Infrastructure: Power grid failure beyond normal restoration timeline; water pressure anomalies.

Step 2 Communications: Cell network saturation or failure; repeater outages; shift to amateur radio traffic.

Step 3 Human Activity: Welfare check activity increases; community gathering at key access points.

Step 4 Vehicle / Movement: Evacuation behavior; generator fuel runs; emergency services activity spike.

The Concurrent Multi-Domain Deviation Rule

When deviations in two or more domains occur within the same observation period, they must be evaluated together — not independently. Two concurrent AMBER observations across different domains equal one RED-level analytical event. This triggers: (1) a cross-domain Event Template; (2) cascade chain review; (3) targeted corroboration; and (4) a briefing to MAG leadership within 12 hours.

ANALYTICAL DISCIPLINE

Cascade analysis is a tool for directing collection — not for drawing conclusions. Identifying a pattern that matches a cascade chain does not confirm the crisis is occurring. The damage to team credibility from false alarms compounds over time and degrades the value of future reporting.

SEE ALSO: INT-01 ANALYSIS OF COMPETING HYPOTHESES (ACH)

When cascade analysis surfaces a significant multi-domain pattern, you have a hypothesis — not a confirmed assessment. INT-01 provides the structured analytical tool for rigorously evaluating that hypothesis against alternatives before briefing leadership or taking action.

PART 5 — FROM OBSERVATION TO REPORTING

The Spot Report (SALUTE Format, Adapted)

Used for any AMBER or RED observation. Designed to be transmitted in any medium using a structure that ensures no critical element is omitted.

SEE ALSO: INT-03 SALUTE AND SPOT REPORT TRAINING

INT-03 covers all four tactical reporting formats — SALUTE, SPOT, SALT, and SITREP — in full depth with field exercises and printable report cards. INT-08 introduces the Spot Report as a collection output tool; INT-03 builds complete reporting proficiency across all formats.

ELEMENT	WHAT TO RECORD
S Size	How many? (people, vehicles, infrastructure failures)
A Activity	What is happening? Describe behavior, not inference.
L Location	Where exactly? Named point, intersection, grid reference.
U Unit / ID	Who or what entity, if identifiable?
T Time	When observed? Date and 24hr time.
E Equipment	What equipment, configuration, or distinguishing features?

Baseline Ref	What is the documented normal? How does this observation deviate?
Threshold	AMBER or RED?
Rec. Action	Monitor / Corroborate / Escalate / Act?

The Pattern of Life Summary

A periodic reporting product — weekly or monthly — providing a concise overview of baseline stability across all four domains. This is the primary INT-08 contribution to the PLN-01 Community SITREP.

INTEGRATION WITH THE COMMUNITY SITREP

The Community SITREP does not collect intelligence directly — it fuses inputs from multiple collection activities into a single shared picture. INT-08 baseline data is one of those inputs. The most recent Pattern of Life Summary provides the pre-incident record against which incident conditions are assessed.

SEE ALSO: PLN-01 COMMUNITY SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

PLN-01 is the direct downstream course from INT-08. The Community Lifelines framework used in PLN-01 — Safety & Security; Food, Water & Shelter; Communications; Energy; Transportation; Health & Medical; Hazardous Materials — maps directly to INT-08's four baseline domains. Students who complete INT-08 first arrive at PLN-01 having already built the baseline data that the SITREP process requires.

SECTION	CONTENT
Period / Prepared by	Collection dates covered; observer ID or team
Human Activity	Status (STABLE / DRIFTING / DEGRADED) | Key observations | Trend
Infrastructure	Status | Key observations | Trend
Vehicle / Movement	Status | Key observations | Trend
Communications	Status | Key observations | Trend
Deviations this period	Number AMBER | Number RED | Event Template references
Cascade indicators	Any multi-domain patterns identified?
Baseline changes	Any values updated? Reason?
Collection priorities	What to watch next period, and why

PART 6 — DEVIATION RECOGNITION AND ESCALATION REFERENCE

Deviation Recognition Indicators

No single indicator is conclusive. Look for a cluster across domains. Two or more concurrent indicators across different domains: open a cross-domain Event Template and brief leadership.

DEVIATION RECOGNITION INDICATORS — CHECK ALL THAT APPLY	
☐	Count, volume, or frequency at this location is measurably above or below the documented baseline
☐	An indicator type appears that has not been observed before at this location or time window
☐	Two or more domains show simultaneous deviations within the same observation period
☐	A deviation that was AMBER on a previous observation has recurred
☐	Infrastructure service that normally restores within a predictable window has not recovered
☐	Vehicle or pedestrian patterns depart from the expected day-of-week and time-of-day norms
☐	Radio nets or repeaters that are normally active have gone silent beyond their expected quiet period
☐	Commercial or government entities that operate on a predictable schedule have missed a cycle
☐	Behavioral tone at a known gathering point has shifted: volume, pace, or demeanor changed
☐	Observations match a Step 1 indicator in any cascade chain on your Cascade Watch List

If 3 or more indicators apply: probable significant deviation. Open Event Template. If 2 or more indicators apply across different domains: open cross-domain Event Template and brief leadership within 12 hours.

Cascade Chain Quick Reference

CHAIN	STEP 1 — WATCH FIRST	DOWNSTREAM EFFECTS
Supply Disruption	Infrastructure: fuel and food resupply delays at commercial locations	Human: stress behaviors, hoarding. Vehicle: outbound traffic surge. Comms: informal net traffic increases.
Civil Unrest Onset	Communications: unusual net traffic, coordination chatter, silence from normally-active groups	Human: group formation, reduced normal activity. Vehicle: convoys, law enforcement. Infrastructure: closures, depletion.
Infrastructure Failure	Infrastructure: power grid failure beyond normal restoration timeline, water pressure anomalies	Comms: cell saturation, repeater outage. Human: welfare checks, gathering. Vehicle: evacuation, emergency services.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR FIRST

Your Cascade Watch List identifies the Step 1 indicators most relevant to your area. These are your highest-priority collection targets. If any Step 1 indicator crosses AMBER threshold, immediately assess whether Steps 2–4 are also showing deviation. Multi-step confirmation within 24 hours elevates the assessment to RED regardless of individual threshold levels.

PLANNING WORKSHEETS

Spot Report Planning Worksheet

Complete all fields before the observation begins. A Spot Report without a documented baseline reference is an observation, not an intelligence product.

SPOT REPORT PLANNING WORKSHEET	
Date / Location	*When and where is the observation taking place?*
Observer	*Who is conducting the observation?*
Collection Point	*Specific location being observed*
Domain	*H (Human) / I (Infrastructure) / V (Vehicle) / C (Communications)*
Baseline Reference	*What is the documented normal for this indicator at this time and day?*
Deviation	*How does this observation differ? Estimated % deviation?*
Threshold	*NOMINAL / AMBER / RED?*
Recommended Action	*Monitor / Corroborate / Escalate / Act?*
Follow-On Required	*What additional collection is warranted?*

Activity Register

Maintain at each observation point for each collection period. Five entries minimum before attempting trend analysis.

ACTIVITY REGISTER	
Observer	*Consistent ID (initials or callsign)*
Location	*Named point or intersection*
Date / Time	*24hr format, consistent timezone*
Domain	*H / I / V / C*
Count / Status	*Numeric count or NORM / DEGRADE / FAIL*
Notes	*Configuration, behavior, direction, anything atypical*
Deviation Flag	*Y = deviates from baseline / N = within normal range*

Post-Observation Event Template

Complete within 30 minutes of observing a deviation. Open this template for any AMBER or RED observation.

EVENT TEMPLATE	
Date / Time / Location	*When and where the deviation was observed*
Observer	*Who made the observation*
Domain	*H / I / V / C*
Observation	*What exactly was observed — specific counts, configurations, directions*
Baseline Reference	*What is the documented normal? What period does it cover?*
Deviation	*How does this differ? Numeric or descriptive — be specific*
Threshold	*AMBER or RED?*
Cascade Flag	*Does this match a Step 1 indicator in any cascade chain? Which one?*
Corroboration Required	*What follow-on collection would confirm or rule out this deviation?*
Recommended Action	*Monitor / Escalate / Brief leadership / Activate protocol?*

Cascade Watch List

Complete for your area and review quarterly. This is your collection priority matrix.

CASCADE WATCH LIST	
Most likely scenario	*Supply disruption / Civil unrest / Infrastructure failure / Other*
Step 1 indicator (domain)	*The first detectable signal in your most likely cascade chain*
Step 2 indicator (domain)	*The secondary effect most likely to follow Step 1*
Step 3 indicator (domain)	*The tertiary effect if the cascade continues*
Collection coverage	*Which team members currently observe each Step 1 indicator?*
Escalation contact	*Who receives notification when AMBER is flagged in this chain?*

KEY TERMS GLOSSARY

TERM	*DEFINITION*
Activity Register	A time-ordered field log capturing observer, location, date/time, domain, count or status, notes, and deviation flag. Primary collection tool for human activity and infrastructure domains.
Baseline	A documented record of observable behaviors, patterns, and conditions across a defined environment during a defined period. The reference against which deviation analysis is conducted.
Cascade Analysis	The practice of identifying how disruptions in one baseline domain produce predictable secondary effects in others, enabling early warning before a developing crisis is visible in all affected domains.
Deviation	An observable difference between a current condition and the documented baseline that meets or exceeds a defined threshold (AMBER or RED).
Event Template	A structured deviation record opened when an observation crosses AMBER or RED threshold. Captures the observation in full and drives follow-on collection.
Pattern Analysis Plot Sheet	A time-by-location matrix plotting observations across collection periods to make activity trends and anomaly clusters visually apparent.
Pattern of Life Analysis	The deliberate, systematic documentation of observable behaviors, patterns, and conditions across a defined environment during a defined period. (FM 34-2-1)
Pattern of Life Summary	A periodic reporting product providing a concise overview of baseline stability across all four domains. The primary INT-08 contribution to the PLN-01 Community SITREP.
Spot Report	A structured deviation report in SALUTE format (adapted), used to communicate any AMBER or RED observation to MAG leadership. Transmittable in any medium.

DOCTRINAL SOURCES

- FM 34-2-1, Reconnaissance and Surveillance — primary source for the four collection domains, pattern analysis plot sheet, and activity register formats
- FM 2-22.3, Human Intelligence Collector Operations (U.S. Army) — area assessment doctrine, reporting formats, and source reliability rating system
- FM 2-0, Intelligence — broad intelligence doctrine covering source reliability and information credibility rating systems (A–F / 1–6)
- Camp X SOE Training Manual (STS 103) — foundational tradecraft for observation methodology in denied environments
- FEMA Community Lifelines Framework — domain-to-lifeline mapping for Community SITREP integration