COMMUNICATIONS · COM-08

COM-08 Dead Drop and Courier Protocols

Non-electronic message passing for EMCON-heavy scenarios, drawn from SOE courier doctrine.

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

This course teaches non-electronic message passing for EMCON-heavy scenarios — dead drops, live drops, brush contacts, and cut-outs — for when any radio transmission would give away your position.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Radio silence only works if you have another way to move information.

COM-04 EMCON teaches you when to go dark. This course teaches what replaces the radio once you're there: concealed drop sites, signal plans that confirm status without approaching the drop, and courier protocols built on compartmentalization rather than any one person's judgment.

▸ **Pair this course with COM-07 (OTP) or COM-12 (DRYAD) — COM-08 protects that a message moved; those protect what it says.**

METHOD SELECTION MATRIX

Method	Personal Contact	Speed	Exposure	Best Use
Dead Drop	None	Slowest	Lowest	Routine, non-urgent coordination
Cut-Out	One-to-one, compartmentalized	Moderate	Low, if held	Ongoing links that must stay unlinked
Live Drop	Brief, planned	Fast	Moderate	Time-sensitive coordination
Brush Contact	Direct, momentary	Fastest	Highest	Urgent / duress messaging

COURSE LESSONS

1	**Course Introduction** EMCON framing, SOE/Camp X grounding, and how COM-08 pairs with COM-07/COM-12
2	**Dead Drops, Live Drops, Brush Contacts, Cut-Outs** Vocabulary and the speed/exposure trade-off
3	**Dead Drop Site Selection** Concealment, cover, weatherproofing, access, camera checks
4	**Signal Plans** Loaded / clear / duress states, designed for a small team
5	**Courier Protocols** Compartmentalization, route variation, recognition, compromise procedure
6	**Capstone: Team SOP** Assemble the SOP, including the FEP MESSAGE DROPS page

DOCTRINAL SOURCES

Source	Title	Description
SOE / Camp X (STS 103)	Courier & Dead-Drop Tradecraft	Historical source doctrine for site selection, signal plans, and compartmentalization
COM-04	EMCON	Defines the conditions under which this course's methods replace radio
COM-07 / COM-12	OTP / DRYAD Encryption	Content protection for whatever is physically carried
INT-09	OPSEC for Households	Compartmentalization and need-to-know principles
FEP Workbook	MESSAGE DROPS Annex	Where Primary/Alternate/Contingency/Emergency drop points are recorded