COMPANION GUIDE TO ONLINE TRAINING

Use alongside the online lessons at fortunefavorsthepreparedcom/int-03-landing/

INT-03: TACTICAL REPORTING FORMATS STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

The Observer's Field Reference

Format Standards, Report Quality Checklists,
Blank Worksheets, and Field Reference Tables

SALUTE · SPOT · SALT · SITREP

Edition v1.0 · 2026

Semper Paratus, Semper Gumby

https://fortunefavorsthepreparedcom/

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TACTICAL REPORTING FORMATS — STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

Companion Guide to Online Training

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> This companion guide is designed to be used alongside the INT-03 Tactical Reporting Formats online training series at fortunefavorsthepreparedcom/int-03-landing/. The online lessons are the instruction. This guide contains format reference tables, report quality checklists, and blank worksheets only — it does not contain the instructional content. It cannot be used as a standalone document.

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The five online lessons are available online. Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon:

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How to Use This Companion Guide

THIS GUIDE IS A COMPANION TO THE ONLINE TRAINING

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Online curriculum: fortunefavorstheprepared.com/int-03-landing/

What this guide contains

For each of the five online lessons: a condensed reference summary (field standards only, not instruction), format selection decision logic, report quality checklists, and blank worksheets for every format. The instruction is delivered online — this guide is what you carry when submitting or reviewing field reports.

Required workflow — online lessons BEFORE using this guide

ORDER MATTERS

Do not open any section of this guide until the corresponding online lesson has been completed. The condensed summaries here are reference material, not instruction. The sequence below is required, not suggested.

- Step 1 — Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon: patreon.com/fortunefavorstheprepared
- Step 2 — Access the online lessons at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/int-03-landing/
- Step 3 — Complete all five lessons including knowledge checks
- Step 4 — Use this guide in the field as a format reference and report template

THIS GUIDE IS NOT STANDALONE

The instruction for each lesson is delivered through the online training series. This guide contains condensed format tables and blank worksheets only. If you have not completed the online lessons, this guide will not teach you the material — it will give you tables whose meaning you do not yet understand.

Guide Map — What to Reference When

When you need…	Turn to…
The four format standards in condensed form	Part I — Format Reference Tables
When to use which format	Part I — Format Selection Logic
SALUTE field-by-field standards	Part I — SALUTE Reference
SPOT fields and Position vs. Location distinction	Part I — SPOT Reference
SALT fields and SPOT vs. SALT comparison	Part I — SALT Reference
SITREP nine-line template	Part I — SITREP Reference
A pre-transmission checklist for any format	Part II — Report Quality Checklists
A blank SALUTE report to fill in	Part III — SALUTE Worksheet
A blank SPOT report to fill in	Part III — SPOT Worksheet
A blank SALT report to fill in	Part III — SALT Worksheet
A blank SITREP nine-line to fill in	Part III — SITREP Worksheet
Doctrinal sources behind the formats	Part IV — Doctrinal Sources

PART I — FORMAT REFERENCE TABLES

Chapter 1: Format Selection Logic

Four formats serve four distinct purposes. The decision to use a specific format is not a preference — it is determined by the time available for observation and the purpose the report serves. Using the wrong format for the situation either loses information (using SPOT when SALUTE is possible) or loses the transmission window (attempting SALUTE when SPOT is required).

Format	Time Window	Location Field	Primary Use
SALUTE	60 sec or more	Grid or named point	Full threat report for planning, analysis, pattern tracking
SPOT	Under 15 sec	Bearing + distance from you	Immediate reaction trigger, movement situations, fire support
SALT	15–60 sec	Grid or named point	First-pass initial contact, to be upgraded to SALUTE
SITREP	Scheduled / as required	N/A (own element status)	Periodic element status report. References filed sighting reports.

CRITICAL: SITREP is not a sighting format. Do not hold threat observations until the next SITREP window. File SPOT or SALUTE immediately when you observe a threat. Reference the filed report in your next SITREP.

Chapter 2: SALUTE Field Reference

Use SALUTE when time allows complete observation across all six fields. SALUTE feeds planning, pattern analysis, and threat assessment. It is also the format used to upgrade a SPOT or SALT report.

	Field	Completion Standard
S	**Size**	Number or bounded estimate. Never vague ("several," "a group"). For mixed elements: "6 dismounted, 2 pickups." Estimate and bound if count not possible.
A	**Activity**	Observable behavior only. Report what you see, not what you infer. Include direction and rate of movement. No intent assessments.
L	**Location**	Grid coordinate (preferred), named mapped point, or distance + bearing from a known reference. Not informal landmarks unless on your group's shared map.
U	**Unit / Uniform**	Clothing color and type, visible insignia or patches, group markers or armbands. If unknown: "civilian dress, no visible markings, affiliation unknown." Never blank.

T	**Time**	Exact timestamp — local or Zulu, consistent with group SOP. Record when observed, not when transmitted. If delayed: "Observed 1430, transmitted 1445 — comms delay."
E	**Equipment**	Weapons (type if identifiable, carried vs. slung, count), vehicles, communications gear, tools. If not visible: "no visible weapons observed." Never blank.

Rule: Never leave a field blank. A blank field is ambiguous between "nothing observed" and "field omitted." Use "unknown," "not observed," or "affiliation unknown" when content is not available.

Chapter 3: SPOT Field Reference

Use SPOT when you have under 15 seconds before you must move or lose visual. SPOT is a temporary report. Always upgrade to SALUTE when the situation allows. When transmitting the upgrade, explicitly reference the original SPOT by time: "SALUTE upgrade to SPOT at 0923."

	Field	Completion Standard
S	**Size**	Count or bounded estimate. Same standard as SALUTE.
P	**Position**	Bearing + distance from your current location or a known reference. Example: "Bearing 045, 300m from OP Bravo." Faster than a grid under time pressure. Grid acceptable if readily available.
O	**Observed Time**	Exact time of observation. Local or Zulu, consistent with group SOP.
T	**Type**	Nature of threat in one line: observed behavior + primary threat indicator + direction. Example: "armed foot patrol moving north." Compresses SALUTE Activity and Equipment into a single entry.

SPOT vs. SALUTE Location: SPOT uses Position (bearing + distance from you) because it is faster to generate under extreme time pressure than a grid coordinate. SALUTE and SALT use Location (grid or named point) because more time is available. This is a functional distinction, not a naming choice.

Chapter 4: SALT Field Reference

Use SALT when you have more time than SPOT allows (up to ~60 seconds) and can report Activity and a proper grid Location. SALT is a first-pass report to be upgraded to SALUTE. Unlike SPOT, SALT uses Location (grid or named point), not Position (bearing-distance from you).

	Field	Completion Standard
S	**Size**	Count or bounded estimate. Same standard as SALUTE.

A	**Activity**	Observable behavior in one sentence. Same standard as SALUTE Activity: no inferences, no intent labels. "Moving north along fence line" not "appeared to be scouting."
L	**Location**	Grid coordinate, named mapped point, or distance + bearing from a known reference. Same standard as SALUTE Location — NOT bearing-distance from your current position (that is SPOT Position).
T	**Time**	Exact timestamp. Local or Zulu. Note transmission delay if present.

SPOT vs. SALT Comparison

	SPOT	SALT
Time window	Under 15 seconds	Up to ~60 seconds
Location field	Position: bearing + distance from you	Location: grid or named mapped point
Activity field	Type (behavior + threat in one line)	Activity (behavior only, one sentence)
Best situation	Movement; immediate reaction trigger	Fixed OP; first-pass initial contact
Always followed by	SALUTE upgrade	SALUTE upgrade
Reference when upgrading	By time of original SPOT	By time of original SALT

Chapter 5: SITREP Nine-Line Reference

SITREP is a periodic or as-required status report on your element — not a sighting format. It is time-driven (transmitted on a scheduled interval) rather than event-driven. SITREPs reference SALUTE/SPOT/SALT reports; they do not restate them.

Line	Field	Completion Standard
L1	DTG	Date-Time-Group of transmission. Format: DD-HHMM-TZ-MON-YY. Example: 221430LJUN26.
L2	As Of	Time information in this report is current through. Often same as DTG or slightly earlier. Indicates staleness of intelligence content.
L3	Unit	Reporting element designation: team name, OP designation, or patrol identifier.
L4	Activity	What your element did during the reporting period. Operations summary, not a threat report.
L5	Enemy / Threat	Threat activity summary for the period. Reference SALUTE/SPOT/SALT reports by time. If none: "NEGATIVE enemy activity this period."
L6	Friendly	Own element status, operational readiness, any coordination with adjacent elements.

L7	Logistics	Resource status. GREEN = 24+ hours. AMBER = 8–24 hours. RED = under 8 hours or immediate need. Cover water, food, fuel, comms batteries.
L8	Personnel	Headcount and casualty status. All present, or report status and mission impact.
L9	Remarks	Observations not fitting above lines, plus actionable requests. Must state what you need — not just that a problem exists.

Logistics color standard: GREEN = sufficient for 24+ hours. AMBER = 8–24 hours remaining. RED = less than 8 hours or immediate resupply needed. Any RED or AMBER item must be accompanied by an actionable request in Line 9 Remarks.

SITREP ≠ immediate report. Significant threats observed during the reporting period require an immediate SPOT or SALUTE. Reference the filed report in Line 5. Do not hold threat intelligence until the next SITREP window.

PART II — REPORT QUALITY CHECKLISTS

Chapter 6: SALUTE Pre-Transmission Checklist

Apply before transmitting a SALUTE report. All items must be confirmed. A report with a blank or vague field is not ready to transmit.

- □ S — Size is a specific number or bounded estimate, not a vague descriptor
- □ A — Activity describes observable behavior only — no inferences or intent assessments embedded
- □ L — Location is a grid coordinate, named mapped point, or distance + bearing from a known reference
- □ U — Unit/Uniform describes what is visible — field is not blank; "affiliation unknown" is an acceptable entry
- □ T — Time is an exact timestamp, not a relative one ("about 20 minutes ago" is not a Time entry)
- □ E — Equipment reports what was observed and notes if nothing was visible — field is not blank

- □ No field is blank — every field has an entry, even if that entry is "unknown" or "not observed"
- □ If there is a delay between observation and transmission, the Time field notes both timestamps
- □ If this report upgrades a prior SPOT or SALT, the upgrade is explicitly referenced by the original report's time

Chapter 7: SPOT Pre-Transmission Checklist

Apply before transmitting a SPOT report. SPOT is designed for transmission in under 15 seconds. If you have more time, use SALT or SALUTE.

- □ S — Size is a number or bounded estimate
- □ P — Position is expressed as bearing + distance from current position or a known reference
- □ O — Observed Time is an exact timestamp, not relative
- □ T — Type states the observable behavior and primary threat indicator in one sentence

- □ The report can be transmitted verbally in under 15 seconds
- □ The plan to upgrade to SALUTE is noted verbally at the end of the SPOT transmission

Chapter 8: SALT Pre-Transmission Checklist

Apply before transmitting a SALT report.

- □ S — Size is a number or bounded estimate
- □ A — Activity describes observable behavior only — one sentence

- □ L — Location is a grid coordinate or named mapped point (NOT bearing-distance from your position)
- □ T — Time is an exact timestamp

- □ The plan to upgrade to SALUTE is noted if conditions allow

Chapter 9: SITREP Pre-Transmission Checklist

Apply before transmitting a SITREP. All nine lines must be addressed. "NEGATIVE" is an acceptable entry for Line 5 if there is no threat activity to report.

- □ L1 DTG — Date-Time-Group is complete and formatted correctly
- □ L2 As Of — stated explicitly if different from DTG
- □ L3 Unit — reporting element is identified unambiguously
- □ L4 Activity — operations summary for the period is present
- □ L5 Enemy — filed SALUTE/SPOT/SALT reports are referenced by time, not restated in full
- □ L6 Friendly — personnel status and any inter-element coordination noted
- □ L7 Logistics — GREEN/AMBER/RED status for all key resources
- □ L8 Personnel — headcount confirmed
- □ L9 Remarks — any RED or AMBER logistics item is accompanied by an actionable request

- □ No immediate threat observation is being held until this SITREP — immediate reports were filed when observed

PART III — BLANK WORKSHEETS

Complete each worksheet in the field as events occur. Use a separate copy for each report. Use pencil or non-smear pen. All fields must be completed — write "N/OBS" (not observed) rather than leaving any line blank.

Chapter 10: SALUTE Blank Worksheet

Observer / OP: _____	**Date:** _____

S	**Size**	
A	**Activity**	
L	**Location**	
U	**Unit / Uniform**	
T	**Time**	
E	**Equipment**	

Upgrade from SPOT/SALT? Reference original report time: _____ · All fields required. Write "N/OBS" if not observed.

Chapter 11: SPOT Blank Worksheet

Observer / Element: _____	**Date:** _____

S	**Size**	
P	**Position (bearing + dist)**	
O	**Observed Time**	
T	**Type**	

SPOT is temporary. Upgrade to SALUTE when situation allows. End verbal transmission with: "SALUTE upgrade to follow."

Chapter 12: SALT Blank Worksheet

Observer / Element: _____	**Date:** _____

S	**Size**	
A	**Activity (behavior only)**	
L	**Location (grid or named pt)**	
T	**Time**	

SALT Location uses grid or named point — not bearing+distance from you (that is SPOT Position). Upgrade to SALUTE as soon as situation allows. Reference this SALT by time when transmitting the upgrade.

Chapter 13: SITREP Blank Worksheet

Reporting Element: _____	**Reporting Period:** _____ to _____ local

L1 DTG	
L2 As Of	
L3 Unit	
L4 Activity	
L5 Enemy / Threat	
L6 Friendly	
L7 Logistics	
L8 Personnel	
L9 Remarks	

L5 Enemy: Reference SALUTE/SPOT/SALT reports by time — do not restate them. "SALUTE filed 1112, see log." is a complete L5 entry. Filing a full SALUTE inside a SITREP is an error.

L7 Logistics color key: GREEN = 24+ hours. AMBER = 8–24 hours. RED = under 8 hours or immediate need. Any RED/AMBER item must have an actionable resupply request in L9 Remarks.

PART IV — DOCTRINAL SOURCES

Chapter 14: Doctrinal Sources

Source	Publisher	Relevance
FM 6-99: Report and Message Formats	Department of the Army	Primary doctrine for SALUTE, SPOT, and SITREP format standards used in this course.
FM 3-21.8: Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad	Department of the Army	Tactical context for sighting reports and patrol reporting procedures.
FM 2-0: Intelligence	Department of the Army, 2014	Army intelligence doctrine including the reporting chain context in which these formats operate.
FM 2-22.3: HUMINT Collection Operations	Department of the Army, 2006	Source for observer reporting doctrine and human intelligence collection context referenced throughout the INT-series curriculum.
AR 530-1: Operations Security (OPSEC)	Department of the Army	OPSEC doctrine relevant to what is transmitted, how, and to whom in field reporting.

> Reporting formats are not bureaucratic exercises. They are compressed communication protocols that put critical information in a predictable location so a decision-maker can act on it without asking clarifying questions. An observation nobody reports is intelligence that never reaches the person who needs it.
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