MUTUAL ASSISTANCE GROUP SERIES · MAG-05

MAG-05 OP/LP Observation Post & Listening Post

Early warning and perimeter security — extending a family or group's security bubble without patrolling for it.

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

An observation post and a listening post are the cheapest security you will ever field. Two or three people, sited well, tell you someone is coming while there is still time to do something about it — which is the difference between a prepared response and a scramble in the dark.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Most families and groups plan security around the perimeter of the house. That is the last place you want to learn someone is there.

By the time movement reaches your fence line, every option that needed time has already expired — you cannot wake anyone, move children, shift a vehicle, or decide whether this is even a threat. A post placed forward moves the moment of discovery from your doorstep to somewhere hundreds of metres out, and turns thirty seconds of warning into twenty minutes.

► **The product of a post is time. Everything else it does is secondary to buying that interval.**

KEY CONCEPTS

Observation Post	Sight. Sited for line of sight onto the approach, and for seeing without being seen.
Listening Post	Hearing. Sited for how sound arrives — wind, landform, water, noise. Works in the dark.
Standoff	Near limit: crossing time enough for your plan to run. Far limit: support must reach you.
Dead Ground	What the position cannot see. Invisible from the post — it has to be walked to be found.
The Seam	Where two sectors meet. A seam that only touches becomes a gap when one post shifts.

COURSE LESSONS

1	**Eyes and Ears**	What a post is for, what it is not, and why posts beat patrols.
2	**Siting the Post**	Start from the approach, not the view. Standoff, dead ground, background.
3	**Occupation and Concealment**	Route in, watch first, build the hide, leave by another route.
4	**Observation Technique**	Strip search, the seven cues, optics errors, and seeing after dark.
5	**Listening Technique**	Siting for the ear, sound logging, and fixing a source you never see.
6	**Sketching and Mapping**	Sector sketch, panoramic sketch, and map overlay for the relief.
7	**Reporting from the Post**	Fact separated from assessment, negative reports, log discipline.
8	**Manning and Discipline**	Rotation, alertness decay, noise and light discipline at 0300.
9	**Actions On**	Compromise triggers, why you do not fight for the post, breaking clean.
10	**The Post Network**	Overlap, seams, choke points, low-tech aids, and finding the gap.
11	**Practicum**	Site and run a post on your own ground against a real approach.

DOCTRINAL SOURCES

MCRP 3-11.3	Scouting and Patrolling	Post selection, pre-occupation watch, strip search, sketching, overlays
FM 34-2-1	Reconnaissance and Surveillance	OP/LP capabilities and limitations; posts versus patrols
Camp X / SOE	STS 103 Syllabus	Field glasses — ground flattening, distance distortion, lens flash