COMPANION GUIDE TO ONLINE TRAINING

SEC-07:
WATCHING THE WATCHERS: OPERATIONS
STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

The Operator's Field Reference

Surveillance Detection Routes · Reading the Environment · Countersurveillance Team Operations
Technical Surveillance Awareness · Reporting, Decisions, and Escalation

Edition v1.0 · 2026

Semper Paratus, Semper Gumby

https://fortunefavorstheprepared.com/
Nick Meacher

SEC-07: WATCHING THE WATCHERS — OPERATIONS — STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

Companion Guide to Online Training

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INSTRUCTOR-LED GROUP TRAINING

Group sessions and facilitated training are available. Contact: fortunefavorstheprepared@protonmail.com

SELECTED MEMBERS ONLY

This course is for members specifically designated for an intelligence or security role, not general distribution. It assumes SEC-02 and SEC-03 are complete.

How to Use This Companion Guide

Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon: patreon.com/fortunefavorstheprepared

Online curriculum: fortunefavorstheprepared.com/sec-07-landing/

What This Guide Contains

For each module: a condensed reference summary covering the same material as the online lessons, formatted for quick field reference rather than first-time learning. This guide is not a substitute for the online lessons — it is a companion to them.

Required Workflow — Online Lessons Before Using This Guide

- Step 1 — Complete SEC-02 and SEC-03. Both are prerequisites.
- Step 2 — Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon: patreon.com/fortunefavorstheprepared.
- Step 3 — Access the online lessons at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/sec-07-landing/.
- Step 4 — Complete each lesson including knowledge checks, in order.
- Step 5 — Use this guide in the field as an operational reference and planning template.

GUIDE STATUS

This edition covers all five modules of SEC-07 in full, plus the course capstone.

Guide Map — What to Reference When

If You Need…	Go To…
SDR design principles — choke points, observation windows, cover	Chapter 1
How to run an SDR and avoid common mistakes	Chapter 1
Building an area baseline and reading contrasts against it	Chapter 2
Civilian OP practice and the SALUTE reporting format	Chapter 2
Countersurveillance team roles and communication	Chapter 3
Protecting a meeting or a moving group	Chapter 3
RF, overhead, and technical detection awareness	Chapter 4
GPS trackers and camera infrastructure	Chapter 4
The Surveillance Incident Report format	Chapter 5
Escalation criteria and abort protocol	Chapter 5
The capstone scenario exercise	Capstone
Doctrinal sources used in this course	Appendix A

CHAPTER 1: SURVEILLANCE DETECTION ROUTES

SEC-03 taught you that every surveillance effort has vulnerabilities — repetition, choke points, reaction to the unexpected, communication signature. A surveillance detection route (SDR) is a route deliberately designed to put pressure on those vulnerabilities until a follower reveals itself.

What an SDR Is, and What It Isn't

An SDR is a planned route walked or driven to determine whether you are being followed — not evasion, and not the same as being careful. Evasion tries to lose a follower you already know is there. An SDR answers a question you don't yet have the answer to: is anyone there at all.

> **DOCTRINE NOTE**
> Camp X SOE tradecraft is explicit: checks for surveillance have to look like ordinary behavior a person would do anyway. The moment the check looks like a check, it stops working — a real team either goes static or aborts, denying you confirmation and learning you're alert.

Three Requirements of a Well-Designed Route

Element	Purpose
Choke points	A point a following team has to pass through to stay with you — forces visibility at a place you control.
Observation windows	A moment with natural, unhurried sightline behind or around you, built into the route, not improvised.
Plausible cover	Every turn, stop, and reversal needs an explanation a bystander — or a following team — would accept without a second thought.

Foot vs. Vehicle SDR

Foot: more choke points available (doorways, alleys, crosswalks), easier to build natural observation windows, but a following team has more plausible reasons to blend in.

Vehicle: fewer but more absolute choke points (a bridge, a single road in/out), harder to disguise observation, but a following vehicle has fewer places to hide once past a genuine choke point. A legitimate U-turn at a gas station or legal turnaround is a classic vehicle check.

Running the Route — Discipline of Natural Behavior

The goal is not to act normal. It's to actually be normal — real pace, genuine attention, observation windows that are incidental rather than the point of the trip. The technique is identical whether it looks purposeful or incidental; the presentation is what matters.

Reading What You Observe

Observation	Meaning
One sighting at one choke point	Noise. Note it, don't react.
Same person/vehicle at two separate choke points	Real signal — the repetition vulnerability in action.

Observation	Meaning
Visible reaction to your choke point	Stronger signal — the choke point forced a decision.
Nothing at all, across a well-designed route	Meaningful information, not an inconclusive shrug.

Common SDR Mistakes

- Repeating the same route every time — becomes predictable, lets a team pre-position.
- Checking too often or too obviously — reads as exactly what it is.
- A route with no plausible destination — a tell on its own.
- Reacting visibly to a possible sighting — confirms you noticed, converts a detection into a blown operation.
- Treating a single sighting as confirmation — wastes the route, erodes reporting credibility over time.

AFTER THE ROUTE

Log every route — date, time, choke points used, and anything observed, even “nothing.” A log over time builds the pattern-of-life picture Chapter 2 depends on.

CHAPTER 2: READING THE ENVIRONMENT

An anomaly only registers as an anomaly against a known baseline. This chapter covers establishing what normal looks like for a location your group uses regularly, then watching and reporting on it without being noticed doing it.

Why a Baseline Comes Before Detection

Detection is a comparison: current observation against known baseline. A car parked for three hours means nothing if you don't know that street rarely has a car parked that long. Build the baseline across multiple visits at different times — not from a single observation.

Building an Area Baseline

- Vehicles — what's normally parked where, for how long, and whose.
- Foot traffic — who's normally around, and when.
- Fixed features — anything that could conceal a fixed observation post.
- Ambient pattern — typical noise and activity level for the time your group actually uses the location.

> **BASELINE, NOT SUSPICION**
> An area baseline is a neutral, factual record of what's there normally — not a list of things to be suspicious of. A baseline built with a suspicious mindset produces a distorted baseline that misflags ordinary things later.

Reading Contrasts Against the Baseline

Contrast Type	Weight
New but explainable	Low — note it, don't escalate.
New and unexplained, repeated	Moderate to high — the repetition indicator from SEC-03 against a baseline.
Absence of something expected	Context-dependent — often nothing on its own.
Behavior contradicting an otherwise plausible cover	High — the hardest to fake and the hardest to teach.

Civilian Observation Post Practice

Position with genuine sightline and a plausible reason to be there for the duration. Rotate positions or personnel rather than sitting in one place for hours — a long single sit is its own fixed-surveillance signature. Scan methodically, near to far, side to side, rather than fixating. Log in the moment; memory reorders itself quickly under any stress.

SALUTE Reporting, Adapted for Surveillance Observations

Element	Civilian Adaptation
S — Size	How many people or vehicles.
A — Activity	What they were doing, in plain terms.
L — Location	Specific enough that someone else could find the exact spot.
U — Unit/Description	Clothing, build, age; vehicle make, model, color, plate.
T — Time	When observed, and duration if relevant.
E — Equipment/Notes	Anything else that clarifies the picture.

WHY THE FORMAT MATTERS

A fixed structure means two reports of the same subject, written by different people on different days, land in a comparable form — turning isolated observations into a confirmable pattern. Leave gaps honestly noted rather than inventing detail you don't have.

CHAPTER 3: COUNTERSURVEILLANCE TEAM OPERATIONS

Modules 01 and 02 taught detection on your own. This chapter covers operating as a team protecting something specific — a meeting, an event, a moving group.

Detection vs. Countersurveillance

An SDR wants to look like nothing. Countersurveillance is positioned to observe, which means solving a harder problem: watch effectively without looking like the kind of team it's trying to detect.

Team Roles

Role	Function
The Principal	The person or group being protected. Behaves normally; lets the team do the watching.
The Cover Element	Close to the principal, plausible reason to be there. Real job is close-in observation.
The Outer Ring	At a distance — parking, approach routes, choke points. Watching for repetition and fixed positions.

> **SMALL TEAMS**
> Small MAGs won't always have numbers for three separate elements. What matters is the underlying principle — someone close, someone watching the approach, clear understanding of who's doing which job — even if the same two or three people cover more than one role.

In-Operation Communication

- Signals — simple, prearranged, non-verbal where possible. Rehearsed before the operation, not invented in the moment.
- Check-ins — scheduled, brief. Vary intervals slightly rather than a fixed clock.
- Escalation calls — a distinct signal reserved only for “I have something” — separate from routine traffic.

Abort Criteria — Set Before You Deploy

Common triggers: a team member believes they've been made; a confirmed hostile presence escalates beyond observation; the principal's safety is directly threatened; communication is lost beyond the agreed interval. Agree on your list before the operation, not during it.

The Pre-Event Walk

Before a meeting, walk the location and approaches specifically looking for what shouldn't be there, using the Module 02 baseline. Time it close enough that a watcher hasn't repositioned, early enough to act on what you find — 20–40 minutes before arrivals is a reasonable default.

Protecting a Meeting

Outer ring and cover element deploy before attendees arrive, not after. Rotate positions periodically during long meetings so the team doesn't become its own fixed-surveillance signature.

Route Protection for a Moving Group

Element	Function
Route reconnaissance	Travel the planned route before departure, checking for anything positioned along it.
Lead position	Ahead of the group, watching for anything developing before the main body reaches it.
Trail position	Behind the group, watching for anyone falling in behind after it passes.

CHAPTER 4: TECHNICAL SURVEILLANCE AWARENESS

COM-03 (COMSEC) and COM-04 (EMCON) cover protecting your own communications and emissions in depth. This chapter is about recognizing when someone else's technical collection might be directed at you.

Three Different Problems

Detection, content interception, and physical location are three different problems with three different levels of difficulty. Detecting a transmission is comparatively easy. Reading content requires unencrypted signal or a successful break. Locating a source requires sustained collection or direction-finding equipment. Don't collapse these into a single “they can hear everything” assumption — and don't assume the opposite either.

RF Surveillance

- Wi-Fi and Bluetooth — short-range by design, typically detectable within roughly 100 feet, though a probing device can be logged by equipment positioned to catch it.
- Cellular — travels much farther and is the basis for how phones are located at all.
- The same Bluetooth/Wi-Fi identifier appearing at multiple group locations is a technical-surveillance equivalent of the SEC-03 repetition vulnerability — except it's your own device creating the pattern.

Overhead Awareness — Be Honest About Limits

Platform	Realistic Civilian Awareness
Satellites	Not detectable or counterable in real time by a civilian MAG. A planning consideration, not a detection skill.
UAVs (drones)	The most realistic overhead threat to actually observe — visually and audibly detectable at typical operating altitudes.
Fixed-wing aircraft	Isolated sightings are rarely meaningful. A pattern of the same aircraft repeatedly overflying the same location is the signal.

Vehicle GPS Trackers

Common placement: wheel wells (magnetic trackers), under the rear bumper, inside the trunk near the taillight, or wired into the vehicle's electrical system. A physical and visual check of these areas — especially after the vehicle has been out of your control — catches most commercially available devices without specialized equipment.

> **IF YOU FIND ONE**
>
> Don't act on it visibly at the location where you found it. Log the discovery, and decide as a group — not alone, in the moment — whether to remove it, leave it and change your pattern, or involve law enforcement.

Camera Infrastructure

Type	Relevance
Fixed public/commercial	Part of the ordinary baseline for most locations. Note once as part of your area baseline.
New or repositioned	A genuine contrast worth logging under the Module 02 framework.
Mobile/portable	Trail cameras or units in parked vehicles — the closest technical equivalent to fixed human surveillance.

CHAPTER 5: REPORTING, DECISIONS, AND ESCALATION

None of Modules 01–04 matters to your group if what you find stays in your head. This chapter covers what to do with an observation, and the frameworks that turn it into something the group can act on.

Confirm / Report / Respond / Continue

Action	When It Applies
Confirm	Single or ambiguous signal. Log it and actively look for a second data point.
Report	Two or more corroborating points, or one strong signal. File a Surveillance Incident Report.
Respond	A report has been reviewed and the group has decided on a course of action.
Continue	The observation was noise, or confirmation didn't produce a second data point.

THE MOST COMMON FAILURE

Skipping straight from a single ambiguous sighting to “respond,” bypassing confirm and report entirely. That's how a group makes a significant decision on thin evidence.

The Surveillance Incident Report — Five Sections

- 1. Summary — what happened, when, what type of surveillance it's consistent with.
- 2. Observations — every relevant SALUTE-format sighting, chronological, undiluted.
- 3. Baseline Comparison — what the area baseline shows and how observations contrast with it.
- 4. Assessment — your analysis and an honestly stated confidence level.
- 5. Recommendation — what you think the group should do; a recommendation, not a decision.

WRITE THE ASSESSMENT HONESTLY

A report that overstates confidence erodes credibility the first time it's wrong — and makes the next report, the one that might be real, harder for the group to take seriously.

Escalation Criteria

Level	Criteria	Response
Routine	Single confirmed sighting, no pattern, no direct threat.	Log and continue monitoring.
Elevated	Confirmed pattern or a strong single signal.	File a report; bring to group decision-makers.
Emergency	Direct threat indicator — made and confronted, device found, pattern coincides with a planned activity.	Immediate leadership notification; consider law enforcement.

Abort Protocol

- The trigger is communicated immediately using the distinct escalation signal, not folded into a routine check-in.
- Every element disengages, not just the one that triggered it — a whole-team decision once called.
- The principal's safety takes priority over completing the mission.
- Debrief immediately afterward, while details are fresh.

Connecting to the Group's Intelligence Picture

- ASAR — incidents concerning a specific location belong in that location's ongoing area assessment.
- Pattern of Life — a surveillance incident is itself a data point about what's changed.
- Daily Threat Report — Elevated and Emergency findings belong in the DTR so leadership sees them in context.

Capstone: Full Scenario Exercise

A MAG has a planning meeting in six days at a location used four times before. A member has twice noticed the same vehicle near the property and along a regular route, with no plate captured either time and no third sighting yet. You are the designated security lead with two team members available.

The Five Tasks

- 1. Surveillance Assessment — classify the sighting, identify the vulnerability a third sighting would exploit, and design an SDR for the regular route.
- 2. Countersurveillance Deployment — plan the pre-event walk and meeting-day roles for two team members; set abort criteria.
- 3. Technical Awareness Check — given a recent vehicle service visit, what technical check belongs in your preparation.
- 4. Surveillance Incident Report — write a complete five-section report assuming a third sighting occurs.
- 5. Escalation Decision — define Routine/Elevated/Emergency thresholds for a group with no prior incident history and apply them.

EVALUATION

There is no single correct answer to every detail. The capstone is evaluated on whether your reasoning correctly applies the frameworks from Modules 01–05, not on matching a script word for word. Work the full exercise online at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/sec-07-11/ before checking the worked answer.

Appendix A: Doctrinal Sources

- FM 2-22.3 — Human Intelligence Collector Operations
- FM 34-2-1 — Reconnaissance and Surveillance and Intelligence Analysis Support to Counterreconnaissance
- MCRP 3-11.3 — Scouting and Patrolling
- AR 530-1 — Operations Security
- Camp X SOE Training Manual (STS 103)
- Counterintelligence for National Security

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