

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
School of Infantry
Training Command
PSC Box 20161
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542-0161

CS1102
03 JAN 06

STUDENT HANDOUT

REPORTING INFORMATION

1. Learning Objectives

a. **Terminal Learning Objective**. Given a situation to observe, issue a SALUTE report by identifying the six elements of the enemy situation. (MCCS.13.03)

b. **Enabling Learning Objective**. None

2. **Methods of Information Gathering**. A commander often acts on information furnished by scouts and patrols. This makes it critical that each scout or member of a patrol be able to thoroughly and accurately communicate observations made while on patrol. While scouting or patrolling, information may be gathered through direct enemy observation or through the interpretation of signs and tracks.

a. **Direct Observation**. The most common method for gathering information through direct observation is the use of a listening post or observation post. Listening and observation posts are commonly used during scouting and as part of a defensive position to provide early warning of an enemy's presence. Listening and observation posts are concealed positions established in locations where observation of the enemy is anticipated. A Marine or team of Marines occupying a listening or observation post maintains keen observation of the assigned area, listens for sounds which provide information regarding enemy presence, and report back all information gathered to higher.

(1) When selecting an observation post, choose an inconspicuous position.

(2) Prior to moving to an observation post, observe the post for 10 to 15 minutes to ensure it is not occupied.

(3) Move to an observation or listening post by a concealed route. If the post is located on a hill, crawl to a position where the skyline is broken.

(4) If a tree is used, the position should have a background so as not to be silhouetted against the sky while climbing or observing.

(5) When leaving the observation post, a different route from that of the approach should be used.

(6) If a radio is used, its antenna should be located to provide clear communication to the controlling commander but masked from enemy observation and direction finding equipment. Upon departure, scouts should remove the antenna from the observation post so as not to give away the position.

(7) When manning an observation or listening post, use all senses available, be particularly alert for movement, objects, sounds, and smells inappropriate to the surroundings. While observing, avoid all un-necessary movement. If observing from a building, keep back from doors and windows.

(a) In daylight, look first at the ground nearest you. Begin observing close to your post and search a narrow strip 50 meters or less deep, going from right to left parallel to your front; then search from left to right a second and similar strip farther away but overlapping the first. Continue to observe until the entire field of view has been searched.

(b) At night, use a night observation device. If one is not available, search the horizon with short, jerky movements, and short pauses. Look a little to one side of an object and then to the other. Lower the head close to the ground to view the object more clearly.

b. Signs and Tracks. In addition to direct observation, a Marine may often be able to estimate size, composition, direction, rate of movement, condition, discipline, state of training, and morale of enemy forces through signs and tracks left behind.

(1) The size of a bivouac or defense area ordinarily indicates the number of enemy occupants. Clothing, ration containers, dumps, etc., further indicate the quantity of the departed enemy force.

(2) The condition of the bivouac area and amount of material abandoned give an indication of the enemy morale, training, and discipline. A well-policed area indicates good discipline. Rubbish, ration, and smoking residue, and nonessential personal items of equipment adrift indicate a lower state of morale, training, and discipline. Stores and material left behind in good condition may indicate a hasty movement or withdrawal. Burned or destroyed materials indicate a deliberate, orderly withdrawal or movement.

(3) Letters, insignia, and other articles may reveal the identity of the enemy unit.

(4) Footprints can be interpreted to determine approximate size and disposition of troops. A few tracks overlapping each other on both sides of a road or trail may indicate a patrol in staggered formation. A large number of tracks indicate troops in column formation. A large column will wear a dry road smooth and flat.

(5) Vehicle tracks can be interpreted to determine whether the vehicle is wheeled or tracked. Wheel tracks typically indicate the use of unarmored or lightly armored vehicles carrying supplies or troops. These vehicles are usually unarmed or armed with crew served weapons. Examples include trucks and utility vehicles. Signs of tracks typically indicate the use of armored vehicles that usually carry heavy ordnance. Examples of tracked vehicles include tanks and self propelled artillery.

3. Methods of Reporting Information. All information reports must be accurate, clear, and concise. Reports should distinguish between facts and opinions, and answer the questions "who", "what", "where", and "when"? Information may be reported by either of the two following methods:

a. Verbal Messages. Verbal messages are used when writing is impractical or when speed is of the essence. Verbal messages should be simple and brief.

(1) Radio is the fastest means for oral reporting. Always use established communication procedures for reporting information via radio. Never send sensitive information over an unsecured radio.

(2) A messenger is used when radio communications are unavailable. A messenger is given exact instructions as to where the message is to be delivered and the route to be taken. The messenger always repeats the message out loud prior to dispatching. Information obtained along the route is also reported. If captured, the messenger does not reveal information trusted to him in the message.

b. Written Messages. Written messages are preferred to oral messages whenever possible. They should be brief, accurate, and clear. When possible, they should include an overlay or sketch of the situation observed or interpreted. Written messages may be posted by a messenger or as a formal report to higher.

c. Pyrotechnics. Pyrotechnics such as flares, colored smoke, and grenades may be used for reporting information provided that the meaning of the signal has been established in advance of the operation. A green star cluster, for example, may be an early warning that the enemy has initiated an advance on a platoon defensive position.

4. SALUTE Report. The standard format for reporting enemy information is the SALUTE report. SALUTE is an acronym that stands for Size, Activity, Location, Unit identification, Time, and Equipment. The report body should be brief, accurate, and clear. Facts and opinions are distinguished. If secondhand information is reported, its source is included. SALUTE reports include all information of value, first about the enemy, and then about the originator. Messages are printed in block letters. Individual items of information are numbered and separated into paragraphs.

a. Information about the enemy must cover:

- (1) Size and/or strength of the enemy.
- (2) Actions or activity of the enemy.
- (3) Location of the enemy and the direction of movement.

(4) Unit identification. The designation of the enemy unit may be derived from unit markings, uniforms worn, or through information provided by enemy prisoners.

- (5) Time and date the enemy was observed.
- (6) Equipment and weapons observed.

b. Information about the originator or writer must cover:

(1) Location at the time of enemy observation referenced to an identifiable terrain feature, by map coordinates, by the back azimuth from each of two identified points, or the back azimuth and distance from one known point.

(2) Intentions of the originator and/or observer. Examples include, Remain in position? Continue on the mission?

c. An example of an appropriate SALUTE report posted from a scouting position could be:

- (1) "Four enemy fighters.
- (2) Conducting vehicle-mounted patrol along Route Blue.
- (3) Grid coordinates 783209 moving east.
- (4) Part of local Taliban militia.
- (5) Observed 20020106 at 1545.

(6) Wearing traditional clothing and carrying 4 AK-47s with possible additional weapons in back of red Toyota pickup truck.

- (7) Observer's location is grid coordinate 780209.

(8) Will remain in position.

5. **Sketches**. Information difficult to describe may be given more accurately on a simple sketch. The sketch may give all the necessary information or it may be used to supplement a written message. A military sketch is generally one of two types: simple or panoramic.

a. A simple sketch is easily made and read. A simple sketch, at a minimum, contains the following items:

(1) Illustration of prominent points in front of the observation position.

(2) Annotated azimuths and distances from the observation position to prominent points.

(3) Annotation of the sketch title.

(4) Date the sketch was prepared.

b. A panoramic sketch is a picture of the terrain's elevation in perspective, as seen from one point of observation. Although a panoramic sketch is not difficult to create, skill and training are necessary to enhance usefulness. A panoramic sketch, at a minimum, contains the following items:

(1) Illustration of the horizontal lines of the landscape.

(2) Illustration of prominent points from the observation position.

(3) Illustration of prominent features such as buildings, trees, roads, etc.

(4) Annotation, above the sketch, of the azimuths from the observation position to the most prominent point in the sketch.

(5) Date and time the sketch was prepared.

(6) Signature of the individual preparing the sketch.

Performance Checklist:

Performance Evaluation Checklist		
1. Issue Salute Report	Yes	No
a. Report the size of the unit		
b. Report the activity of the unit		
c. Report the location of the unit		
d. Report the identity of the unit		
e. Report the time of sighting		
f. Report the unit's equipment		

Reference and Pages: MCWP 3-11.3, Scouting and Patrolling; pages 3-1 through 3-2, 5-1 through 5-4, and 6-5.