

## Radio Call

—William Howerton

Sierra 16 this is Echo 23, SALUTE reports follows:

S: Two males, one vehicle

A: Conducting Route Recon along MSR Tampa

L: Sunni Triangle

U: Unknown - Sunni Imam

T: 1537Z

E: AK-47, RPG in vehicle

Echo 23, Sierra 16 Roger over

A rush of adrenaline comes through your stomach to your fingertips as a voice acknowledges the imminent danger your soldiers currently face. Focused on voices over the radio for signs to release your combat power, your QRF is useless to the four-man Traffic Control Team, because an orange traffic cone between Baghdad and Balad looking for Imams and 57mm rocket blasters was a random task you approved of within the last 12 hours. You listen, learn, assess, report, direct, advise because the TCP Team depends on your mentorship, coaching and calming presence from sender to receiver, as you pray for peace while cussing for a violent end to hostile situation (Shoot the Son of a ..... ) because enemy and friendly are scared equally and you want the soldiers safe, ASAP.

A 24 minute encounter—  
you close your eyes  
hope this engagement will go away  
no harm to your soldiers  
and another report comes in:

Sierra 16, Echo 23, ACE Report follows:  
100% Ammo,  
no Casualties,  
all Equipment accounted for,  
prisoners detained, weapons confiscated, mission continues, this  
is Sierra 16, good job, roger out, until the next radio call.