



Military English

Lesson: Radio Communications (RATEL) - Listening

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Overview:

This lesson covers a two-part radio communications scenario at a vehicle checkpoint.

In this lesson, you will:

- ✓ read and listen for general information in a text
- ✓ listen for specific words in a text
- ✓ learn the meaning of new words
- ✓ use new words in conversations
- ✓ speak using radio communications terminology

Prepare for Listening

1) Work in a small group. Discuss the following:

- a. What are some basic rules of radio communication? *E.g., Speak clearly.* **Other possible answers: do not shout, speak slowly, keep your message simple, be brief, speak confidently, do not interrupt, identify yourself, pause in between pieces of information...**
- b. Do you know any radio communication words such as *roger*? Make a list of radio communications words. **Tips: Set a timer. Ask one student to be the writer.**
- c. Look at your list. What do these words mean? When are they used?

2) Look at the pictures below. These are vehicle* checkpoints (VCP).

- a. What is a vehicle checkpoint? **A place where traffic is stopped so that it can be checked.**
- b. Are there vehicle checkpoints in your country? Why? Why not?

*vehicle (n) = a truck, bus, car, motorcycle, etc.



Listening

- 3) You are going to listen to a radio conversation at a vehicle checkpoint. Listen to the first part of the conversation. **Gist activity. Ensure students listen only first. Ask them to stay on this page. They are not to read the conversation on page 2 yet.**
- Discuss in a small group. How many people are there? **3** What happened? **A VCP is preparing to stop and search a suspicious approaching vehicle.**

- 4) Now read Radio Conversation 1 Part 1. Don't write anything. What do the numbers 10, 11 and 12 mean? They are the call signs (identification numbers) of the speakers. Call signs are pronounced as separate numbers, e.g. 10 = "One Zero", not "ten". Students may also check meanings of any new words.

Radio Conversation 1 - Part 1

- A: 10, this is 11, over.
 B: 11, this is 10, send, over.
 A: 11, red vehicle approaching VCP at speed. Appears to match suspect vehicle reported earlier. More to follow, over.
 B: 10, send, over.
 A: 11, Vehicle also appears to be heavy. Suspected VBIED*, over.
 B: 10, roger. Stop the vehicle and prepare to search. Out to you.
 12, this is 10, acknowledge, over.
 C: 12, ack, over.
 B: 10, move to location 2 now, over.
 C: 12, WILCO, out.

*VBIED = a bomb. This stands for Vehicle Based Improvised Explosive Device

- 5) Listen again and complete the gaps with the words below. Then check your answers with a partner. Students may already know some of these words. If some are having difficulty, you may 1. provide the first letters of some/all words; 2. Inform them that each gap in their copy corresponds to one word.

roger // more to follow // send // over // out to you // acknowledge // WILCO // out // this is // ack

- 6) Now listen to Part 2 and complete the gaps with the words you hear. Option to repeat instructions, as Part 1.

Radio Conversation 1 - Part 2

Suspect vehicle has arrived at VCP, 12 is in location 2, and 11 is talking with people in vehicle.

- C: 10, this is 12. Firm and covering in location 2, over.
 B: 10, roger. Out to you.
 11, send SITREP*, over.
 A: 10, this is 11. Vehicle has 1 driver and 1 passenger, both with valid ID**. They are taking a radio to the next town for repair. Vehicle is very old and in poor condition, more to follow, over.
 B: 10, send, over.
 A: 11, made visual search of vehicle interior, and mirror search of under vehicle. Nothing suspect found. Allowing vehicle to pass through. Over.
 B: 10, say again all after 'found', over.
 A: 11, allowing vehicle to pass through, over.
 B: 10, acknowledged. Out.

*SITREP = situation report **ID = Identification

7) Listen again and check your answers. Then compare your answers with a partner.

Learning Military Vocabulary

8) The words in bold in the text are important military words that you should learn to use. Match the military words on the left to their definitions on the right. Look at the example. Then compare your answers with a partner.

out	l	a. Yes.
over	d	b. The speaker will say more. Please listen for more information.
WILCO	g	c. Let me know that you received and understood this message.
roger	h	d. I have finished speaking. I need an answer from you.
confirm (v) militia are present	j	e. Repeat all, or part, of your last message.
send (v) SITREP	i	f. Continue behaving in the same way (as previously specified)
acknowledge/ack (v)	c	g. I understand your message and will do what you want me to do. (<i>Abbreviation for 'will comply'.</i>)
maintain (v) SITREPs	f	h. I have received all of your last message.
more to follow	b	i. I am ready to receive your message/information.
this is C21	m	j. Please confirm/check... (clearance, instruction, action, information...).
say again all after/all before 'found'	e	k. I want/require... (clearance, instruction, action, information...).
request (v) permission to reinforce	k	l. This complete exchange of messages is finished and no response is expected.
affirmative (adj)	a	m. This message is from the station whose call sign immediately follows.

9) Now let's practise saying the words in this worksheet. Pay attention to the word stress (strong/weak parts of words. E.g. **roger**, **confirm**). Listen and repeat. **Option to drill pronunciation with class/individuals. If time allows, ask students to test each other. E.g. "What does affirmative mean?", "What's the word for yes?"**



Practice

10) Read radio conversation 2. Using the words from the vocabulary list, complete the gaps. You do not need to use all the words. **Encourage students to read and understand the situation first, before adding the words. There may be more than one suitable option for some answers.**

roger // out // over // WILCO // confirm // send // acknowledge or ack // acknowledged //
maintain // more to follow // this is // say again // request // affirmative

Radio Conversation 2

- A: C20, this is C21. SITREP, over.
- B: C20, send, over.
- A: C21, problem at food distribution point at grid 987624 in Red Cross camp. Security detail* not enough for large crowd.
Request permission to reinforce, over.
- B: C20, roger. Confirm militia** are present, over.
- A: C21, affirmative. Driver in truck has gun, over.
- B: C20. Ack, join security detail on frequency 45.10. Maintain SITREPs, over.
- A: C21, WILCO, out.



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* security detail – a team of soldiers that has to protect one or more people

** militia – a group of people trained to defend their community or country. They are not part of the army.

11) Compare your answers with a partner – did you get the same answers? Discuss.

12) Practise the conversation with your partner. Then change roles.

- For more information about radio communications, watch this video:

Type on YouTube [Military Radio Traffic 101- A Machinima How To](#) or scan the QR Code.



- This lesson links with → Vocabulary – Military Alphabet; Vocabulary – Military Time.

N.B. The radio words presented in this lesson may vary in meaning and use depending on their context, the country of origin, and the service (Army, Navy, Air Force).

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