

GTWCONSULTANCY

ESSENTIAL GUIDE

to Two-Way Radio Communication

Introduction

Two-way radios are the backbone of security operations. Used properly, they enhance team coordination, improve response times, and maintain safety across a site. This essential guide outlines core principles for using radio communications effectively—based on real- world experience in dynamic and often high-pressure environments.

1. Getting Started: The Radio

Checklist

Before you can communicate, ensure the following:

- Battery Charged – A dead radio is a dead link in the chain. Charge and check spares.
- Radio Powered On – Usually via the volume knob.
- Correct Channel Selected – Being on the wrong frequency means you're talking to yourself.
- Volume Set – Adjust to a clear but non-intrusive level.

Top Tip: Conduct a radio check before deployment—especially at multi-crew events or when working across large venues.

2. Making Yourself Heard

Clear transmission relies on technique:

Hold the Radio 10–15cm from your mouth

Speak clearly—no shouting, no mumbling

Wait for the channel to clear before speaking

Press the Push-To-Talk (PTT) button, then pause for 1 second before speaking

Release the PTT to listen

"If you hold the mic too long, you're blocking others—including someone trying to call for help."

3. Clarity Is Key

Two-way radios are half-duplex—only one person can speak at a time. This means:

- Keep messages short, structured, and necessary
- Think before you transmit
- Use plain language unless using agreed codes
- Wait and allow responses before continuing

Structure Example:

"Control from Alpha One — person ejected, male, mid-20s, heading to exit Gate C. Over."

4. Know the Lingo (And Use It Properly)

Standardised radio language avoids confusion. Here's a quick reference of common terms:

Radio check
Can you hear me? / What's my signal strength?

Read you loud and clear
You're coming through fine.

Roger that
Message received and understood

Wilco
I will comply

Affirmative
Yes

Negative
No

Come in
Can you hear me?

Go ahead
I'm ready for your message

Say again
Repeat your last message

Stand by
Wait, I'll get back shortly

Wait out
Expect longer delay, I will return

Break, break
Interrupting due to urgent matter

Emergency, emergency
Immediate threat to life – priority channel required

Over
Message complete, awaiting reply

Out
End of conversation, no reply expected

I spell
I will now spell the next word (use phonetic alphabet)

5. Situational Codes (Optional)

Where appropriate and agreed with all teams in advance, consider using colour codes for incidents:

Code	Meaning
Code Blue	Non-urgent / minor incident (e.g., missing phone)
Code Yellow	Moderate concern requiring prompt attention (e.g., aggressive person)
Code Red	Immediate danger / serious incident (e.g. fight, fire, medical)

6. Professional Habits: Radio Discipline

- Do not use radios for personal chatter
- Acknowledge all instructions received
- Do not interrupt unless it's urgent or safety-critical
- Avoid talking over others
- When unsure, ask for confirmation

7. Common Errors to Avoid

- Talking before pressing PTT
- Speaking too close or too far from the mic
- Using wrong channel for the situation
- Forgetting to release PTT and blocking the channel
- Panicking under stress—stay calm and keep it simple

8. Phonetic Alphabet (For Spelling Critical Info)

Use the phonetic alphabet to avoid confusion when spelling names or codes over radio.