



APS Field Manual: Data Collection Protocols

Version: 3.2 | **Division:** Field Research | Cascadia

1. The Golden Rule: Timestamp Synchronization

Your clipboard form is analog. The subject's form is digital. **YOU are the bridge.**

- **The Critical Moment:** As soon as the subject taps "Submit" on the tablet, check your watch/phone.
- **The Action:** Write that exact time (e.g., 14:02) in the **Time of Submission** field on your clipboard.
- **Why:** The Registry uses this minute-by-minute match to merge your notes with their story. If the times don't match, the data is orphaned.

2. Coding Guide: Section B (Environment)

Use these definitions to ensure consistent coding across all teams.

Weather Conditions

- **CLEAR / OVERCAST / RAIN:** Self-explanatory.
- **STORM:** Active thunder/lightning or high wind.
- **OZ (The Oz Factor):** A sudden, localized silence. Birds stop singing, wind stops, background hum vanishes. The world feels "paused." This is a critical indicator of High Strangeness.

Ambient Noise

- **SILENT:** Near-zero decibels.
- **HUM:** The low-frequency buzz of electricity, ventilation, or "The Hum."
- **LOUD:** Chaos that might explain the subject's stress (e.g., construction noise).

Technical Interference

- **DRAIN:** Battery drops significantly (e.g., 80% to 20% in minutes) without cause.

- **GLITCH:** Screen artifacts, audio distortion, or apps crashing repeatedly.

Subject Profile

- **OCCUPATION:** Record specific trade/profession (e.g., "Welder" not just "Construction"). This is vital for socioeconomic tracking.
- **ATTRIBUTION:** Record the subject's own theory of the event (e.g., "I think it was a military drone"). Do not correct them. This measures belief systems, not objective reality.

3. Coding Guide: Section C (Subject Observation)

How to interpret the subject's behavior without diagnosing them.

Demeanor

- **CALM:** Subject is detached. They are reporting a fact, not an emotional event.
- **AGITATED:** Subject is physically restless, looking around, or jumpy.
- **INTENSE:** The "True Believer." They are trying very hard to convince you.
- **CONFUSED:** They seem unable to process what happened (Ontological Shock).
- **SKEPTICAL:** They don't want to believe what they saw ("It was probably just a drone, but...").

Narrative Delivery

- **FLUID:** The story flows naturally with pauses for thought. (High credibility).
- **REHEARSED:** They speak fast, without pauses, using specific buzzwords. It sounds like a Reddit post they memorized. (Potential Cultural Priming).
- **FRAGMENTED:** They jump around in time or struggle to find words. (Common in traumatic recall).

3.5 Legal Consent & Archiving Protocol

- **The Mandatory Question:** You must explicitly ask every subject: "*Do you consent to having this story published anonymously in the public archive?*"
- **The Checkbox:**
 - **PUBLISH_ANON:** Subject agrees to public history. (Preferred).
 - **PRIVATE_DATA:** Subject wants data used for internal stats only.

- **The Rule:** If this section is left blank, the data defaults to **PRIVATE_DATA** and cannot be used on the website. **Always get the selection.**

4. Safety & Ethics (The "No Debunking" Rule)

Your job is **Methodological Agnosticism**.

- **Do Not Validate:** Do not say, "*Wow, that sounds exactly like a Skinwalker.*" (This biases their memory).
- **Do Not Debunk:** Do not say, "*That was probably just sleep paralysis.*" (This shuts them down).
- **The Correct Response:** "*Thank you for sharing that. I am documenting exactly what you experienced.*"

5. Deployment Checklist

Before you leave the office/base, ensure you have:

- 1x Tablet (fully charged) with **index.html** loaded.
- 1x Clipboard with 10x APS Field Instruments (v3.2) AND 10x Subject Questionnaires (v3.2).
- 5x *APS Resource Cards* (The quarter-sheet handout).
- 2x Pens (Ink can freeze or fail in the field; bring backup).
- 1x Analog Watch (In case of digital failure).

6. The "Elevator Pitch" (How to get the flyer up)

When asking a business owner (the "Gatekeeper") to post a flyer, the goal is to appear **academic, historical, and harmless**. You want to avoid sounding like a "conspiracy theorist."

Here are three scripts based on the "Vibe" of the location:

The "Gatekeeper" Scripts (Solo Director Edition)

Option A: The "Archivist" Approach

- **Best For:** Independent Bookstores, Libraries, Historical Societies.*
- **The Vibe:** Intellectual, preservationist, respectful of history.

"Hi there. I'm a local researcher managing a project called the American Peripheromenal Survey. I'm currently building a digital archive of Pacific Northwest folklore and 'high strangeness' accounts—essentially preserving local stories that usually go undocumented.

I was hoping to post a small card on your community board to let people know where they can submit their own experiences to the archive. It's purely for historical preservation."

Option B: The "Sociologist" Approach

- **Best For:** Community Centers, Grocery Stores, Post Offices, "Normie" Hubs.*
- **The Vibe:** Neutral, academic, data-driven, harmless.

"Good morning. I manage a data project regarding 'Anomalous Experiences' here in the Cascadia region. I'm conducting a passive survey on how people interpret unusual events—like unexplained lights or strange wildlife encounters.

I'm looking for a spot to place a recruitment flyer. It's strictly for data collection—no soliciting or selling anything. Would you have space on your public board?"

Option C: The "Field Investigator" Approach

- **Best For:** Indie Coffee Shops, Dive Bars, Music Venues, Comic Shops.*
- **The Vibe:** Direct, slightly conspiratorial (in a fun way), "local mystery."

"Hey, quick question for you. I run a site called the American Peripheromenal Survey. Basically, I catalog reports of UFOs, cryptids, and high strangeness right here in North Seattle.

I have a feeling your regulars probably see and hear some interesting things. Is it cool if I pin up a flyer with a QR code? It's just a secure drop-box for them to share their stories anonymously."



Handling Objections (The "FAQ")

Even with a perfect script, people might ask follow-up questions. Here is how to answer them without breaking character:

Q: "Is this for a movie or a game?"

A: "No, it's an actual data registry. But I admit the branding is a little stylized—it helps people feel comfortable sharing stories they might otherwise feel silly talking about."

Q: "Are you going to bother our customers?"

A: "Never. It's completely passive. I just put up the flyer, and if someone is interested, they scan the code on their own time. I won't hang around."

Q: "Is this a cult?"

A: (Smile/Laugh) "Definitely not. Just a data nerd trying to organize ghost stories."

Q: "What do you do with the stories?"

A: "First, I strip out all names and personal details to ensure absolute privacy. Once the report is anonymized, it gets added to our public registry online. The goal is to build a searchable, open-access history of these events so the community can finally see what's happening in their own neighborhoods."



Pro Tip: The "Prop" Strategy

When you approach the counter, hold the flyer or business card in your hand visible to them.

Don't reach into your bag after asking. Showing the high-quality, professional design of the card immediately answers the question "Is this guy crazy?" with a visual "No, he is professional."

APS Field Manual: Appendices

APPENDIX A: THE TAXONOMY OF ANOMALIES

(The "What" — Defining the Mission Categories)

This section provides the field definitions for the 4 Mission Categories used in your Bibliography and Database. A Researcher uses this to quickly categorize a report in the field.

- **Type A (Liminal / Spatial):** Events involving distorted architecture, "The Backrooms," impossible geographies, or specific locations that feel "wrong."
- **Type C (Corporeal / Physiological):** Events where the primary evidence is on the body. Missing time, paralysis, "The Oz Factor" (silence), nausea, or scratches.
- **Type D (Biological / Cryptid):** Encounters with unrecognized biological entities. Sasquatch, Dogman, or anomalous fauna.
- **Type E (Energetic / Aerial):** UAP (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena), lights, orbs, or "glitches" in the sky.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW & SAFETY PROTOCOLS

(The "How" — Rules of Engagement)

This section holds the safety scripts we previously identified as standalone files. Merging them here keeps the manual consolidated.

- **B.1 - The "Clean Slate" Rule:** Never tell a subject about other reports in their area before they give their testimony. It contaminates the data.
- **B.2 - The "De-Escalation" Script:** (Reference to [APS_Debriefing_Protocol.pdf](#)). What to say if a subject becomes emotionally distressed.
- **B.3 - Emergency Contacts:** (Reference to [APS_Resource_Card_Cascadia.pdf](#)). The Suicide Prevention Lifeline and local Crisis numbers.

APPENDIX C: THE "TWO-TIER" INTAKE STRATEGY

1. The Digital Sieve (The Website) The public-facing intake form ([index.html](#)) is designed for **Minimal Friction**. It sacrifices depth for volume. Its primary function is to establish:

- Is the location verified?
- Is the narrative coherent?

- Does the contact info work?

2. The Analog Sieve (The Questionnaire) The **APS_Experience_Questionnaire** is the "Offline Mirror" of the website. It captures the same narrative and consent data but is designed for passive recruitment (e.g., left in libraries, cafes) or for subjects who prefer analog reporting.

3. Operational Protocol (The Escalation) When a high-value report arrives via **EITHER** the Website or the Offline Questionnaire (Tier 1), the Researcher must engage the **Tier 2 Protocol**:

1. **Contact:** Reach out to the subject via the provided secure contact info.
2. **Schedule:** Arrange a Field Intercept or Remote Interview.
3. **Investigate:** Administer the **APS Field Instrument**.
 - *Why:* The Field Instrument captures the critical environmental and physiological data (The "Oz Factor," Nausea, Technical Interference) that subjects almost always omit from their initial written report.

| "*The Questionnaire finds the story. The Field Instrument verifies the reality.*"

APPENDIX D: THE DIGITAL INTERCEPT PROTOCOL

(Use when Subject refuses physical meeting or is geographically distant)

1. The Trigger

Initiate this protocol if the subject restricts contact to "Email Only" or declines a face-to-face Field Intercept. Do not pressure them; pressuring a high-strangeness witness often leads to a complete loss of contact.

2. The Status Change

- **Action:** In the Master Log, downgrade the **engagement_status** from **Tier 3 (Field Intercept)** to **Tier 2 (Remote Follow-up)**.
- **Goal:** You must still complete the **APS Field Instrument**, but you will do so using their written responses rather than your own observation.

3. The "Anchor" Script (Email Template)

Copy and paste this text. It is designed to verify the environment without requiring a phone call.

4. Coding the Field Instrument (Remote)

When you receive their reply, fill out a blank Field Instrument as follows:

- **Section A (Site):** Check **DIG** (Digital Context / Remote Interview).

Subject: APS Cascadia | Research Query: Case # *[Insert Log ID]*

"Thank you for submitting your report to the Archive. Because your report includes specific high-strangeness markers (e.g., Silence/Oz Factor), we have flagged this as a Priority Case.

We respect your privacy and can complete the environmental verification via email. Could you please answer the following three questions to help us calibrate the data?

1. **The Sound:** Before the event started, was the background noise level normal (traffic, birds), or was there a sudden 'cutoff' of sound?
2. **The Environment:** Can you describe the lighting at the exact moment? Was it artificial (streetlights), natural, or pitch black?
3. **The Physical:** Immediately after the event, did you notice any battery drainage on your phone or physical nausea?

OPTIONAL: If you are willing, sending a Google Maps pin of the exact location helps us check for geological fault lines in that area. Your location data will never be made public."

- **Section B (Environment):** Fill in *only* what they explicitly confirmed in the email. Leave others blank.
- **Section C (Observation):** Leave **Demeanor** and **Physical Markers** **BLANK**. You cannot judge body language via email.
- **Section D (Notes):** Write: "*Remote Intercept via Email. Subject refused field contact.*"