

Traffic Handling Guide (by K2KJ):

Part of Emergency Communications is the ability to handle formal written traffic. This sheet is a guide for that purpose. For the sake of reference, the standard ARRL Radiogram format will be used, however if a piece of traffic you are handling does not exactly fit the mold of an ARRL radiogram, DO NOT transcribe the message to radiogram format, rather pass the traffic exactly as you received it.

A radiogram is broken into four parts, the preamble, the address block, the text, and the signature.

The preamble is essentially the return address block and contains eight fields. The fields are number, precedence, handling instructions (HX), station of origin, the check, the place of origin, time filed, and date.

1. The number field indicates the message number of the originating station.
(If this is my tenth piece of traffic generated for the year it would be number ten)
2. The precedence field is used to annotate the relative importance of the message. The precedence can be R (routine), W (welfare), P (priority), or Emergency. Emergency is always spelled out¹.
3. The Handling instructions field is used to supply the receiving station with instructions on how to handle the traffic. Handling instructions are denoted with alpha-phonetics (ie Hotel X-ray Golf) would be HXG. Handling instructions are listed below.² Multiple handling instructions can be grouped together (HXA, HXE, etc.)
4. The station of origin field is used to denote the call of the station that originally formulated the traffic. This field does not change as the traffic is passed.
5. The check³ field is used to denote the word count of a message. The signature portion of a message is not included in the check. The check may not be changed, but if the check is questioned you may state the original check then stroke (/) (stated corrected on phone) what you think the check is. If the message contains an ARRL numbered radiogram, ARL will be inserted before the check. If a message contains an ARRL numbered radiogram⁴ with 10 words, the check would be ARL 10. Not ARRL radiogram number 10.
6. The place of origin field can either be the location of the originating station, or the location of the originating party. This is usually city, state format.
7. The filing time is optional and used when speed of delivery is significant. Time is always in UTC (Zulu) format.
8. The final part of the preamble is the date, this is given in month, day format.

The next section of the radiogram is the address. Although zip code and phone number may not be entirely necessary, the more address information provided, the higher the chances of the traffic reaching its destination. A typical address would be Joe Smith, 122 Saint Cloud Drive, St. Joseph MO, 64501, 914-700-0000.

The next section of a radiogram is the text message itself. Usually the text portion of a radiogram is preceded and followed by a break. The break signifies the starting and stopping point of the word count (CHECK). The text of a message of course can be anything, but if five words per line are written, it will help in the check (word count). The text should never end with an X-RAY (a period) it just wastes space and makes the word count longer. Complimentary closing word such as sincerely, belong in the text not the signature.

The final section of a radiogram is the signature. The signature is usually preceded by the break following the text, and can be any length (Ie, Jimmy, Johnny, Mary, Martha, Kevin, and Melissa). Remember the signature is not counted in the check.

Precedence: Emergency means any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by amateur radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities. This includes official messages of welfare agencies during emergencies requesting supplies, materials, or instructions vital to relief of populace in emergency areas. When in doubt, do not use this precedence.

P (Priority) is for official messages having a specific time limit, official messages not covered in the emergency category, press dispatches and emergency-related traffic not of the utmost urgency, and notice of death or injury in a disaster area, personal or official.

W (Welfare) this classification refers to either an inquiry as to the health and welfare of an individual in a disaster area, or an advisory from the disaster area that indicates all is well. Welfare traffic is handled after all emergency traffic and priority traffic is cleared.

R (Routine) most traffic will bear this designation in normal times. In disaster situations, traffic labeled Routine should be handled last, or not at all when circuits are busy with higher precedence traffic.

²Handling Instructions (HX):

HXA followed by message number, Collect landline delivery is authorized by addressee within ___ miles. If no number given, authorization is unlimited.

HXB followed by message number, Cancel message if not delivered within ___ hours of filing time, service originating station.

HXC Report date and time of delivery to originating station.

HXD Report to originating station the identity of station from which received, plus date, time, and method of delivery.

HXE Delivering station get reply from addressee, originate message back.

HXF followed by message number, Hold delivery until ___ (date).

HXG Delivery by mail or landline toll call not required. If toll or other expense involved, cancel message and service originating station.

³Check The check is just the number of words in the text. Each period (pronounced X-ray) and question mark (Pronounced Query) counts as one word. A telephone number in the form 914-298-000 would count as three words. Mixed letter-number groups count as one word (ie 1700Z). Initial or number groups count as one word if sent together, two if sent separately. The signature does not count as part of the text, but any closing lines do. ARL radiogram numbers should always be written out (ie ARL Sixty One). This would count as three words. Zip codes count as one word. Zip +4 codes count as two words. Here are some examples.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| W B Smith-3 words | Charles J McQue-3 words | St Joe's-2 words |
| 5 pm - 2 words | SASE-1 word | ARL Forty Six-3 words |
| 2N5623-1 word | Seventy Three-2 words | 73-1word |
| 12590-1 word | 12590-1024-2words | |

⁴Radiograms: The ARRL has two groups of radiograms, the first group contains twenty-six messages, and is meant to be used for possible emergency use. Group two contains 21 messages and can be used in routine messages. Remember ARL message numbers should be spelled out at all times.

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| ONE | Everyone safe here, please Don't worry. |
| TWO | Coming home as soon as possible. |
| THREE | Am in ___ hospital. Receiving excellent care, and recovering fine. |
| FOUR | Only slight damage here, do not be concerned about disaster reports. |
| FIVE | Am moving to new location, Send no further mail or communication, will inform you of new address when relocated. |
| SIX | Will contact you as soon as possible |
| SEVEN | Please reply through amateur radio through the amateur delivering this message. This is a free public service. |
| EIGHT | Need additional ___ mobile or transportable equipment for immediate emergency use. |
| NINE | Additional ___ radio operators needed to assist with emergency at this location. |
| TEN | Please contact ____. Advise to standby and provide further emergency information, instructions, or assistance. |

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| ELEVEN | Establish Amateur Radio Communications with ____ on ____ MHz. |
| TWELVE | Anxious to hear from you. No word in some time. Please contact me as soon as possible. |
| THIRTEEN | Medical Emergency situation exists here. |
| FOURTEEN | Situation here becoming critical. Losses and damage from ____ increasing. |
| FIFTEEN | Please advise your condition and what help is needed. |
| SIXTEEN | Property damage very severe in this area. |
| SEVENTEEN | REACT communications services also available. Establish REACT communications with on channel ____. |
| EIGHTEEN | Please contact me as soon as possible at ____. |
| NINETEEN | Request health and welfare report on _____. (State name, address, and phone number.) |
| TWENTY | Temporarily stranded. Will need some assistance. Please contact me at ____. |
| TWENTY ONE | Search and Rescue assistance is needed by local authorities here. Advise availability. |
| TWENTY TWO | Need accurate information on extent and type of conditions now existing at your location. Please furnish this information and reply without delay. |
| TWENTY THREE | Report at once the Accessibility and best way to reach your location. |
| TWENTY FOUR | Evacuation of residents from this area urgently needed. Advise plans for help. |
| TWENTY FIVE | Furnish as soon as possible the weather conditions at your location. |
| TWENTY SIX | Help and care for evacuation of sick and injured from this location needed at once. |

Group two radiograms are as follows:

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|-------------|---|
| FORTY SIX | Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come. |
| FIFTY | Greetings by Amateur Radio. |
| FIFTY ONE | Greetings by Amateur Radio. This message is sent as a free public service by ham radio operators here at _____. Am having a wonderful time. |
| FIFTY TWO | Really enjoyed being with you. Looking forward to getting together again. |
| FIFTY THREE | Received your _____. It's appreciated; many thanks. |
| FIFTY FOUR | Many thanks for your good wishes. |
| FIFTY FIVE | Good news is always welcome. Very delighted to hear about yours. |
| FIFTY SIX | Congratulations on your _____, a most worthy and deserved achievement. |
| FIFTY SEVEN | Wish we could be together. |
| FIFTY EIGHT | Have a wonderful time. Let us know when you return. |
| FIFTY NINE | Congratulations on the new arrival. HOPE mother and child are well. |
| SIXTY | Wishing you the best of everything on _____. (Can be used for any holiday). |
| SIXTY ONE | Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. |
| SIXTY TWO | Greetings and best wishes to you for a pleasant _____ holiday season. |
| SIXTY THREE | Victory or defeat, our best wishes are with you. Hope you win. |
| SIXTY FOUR | Arrived safely at _____. |
| SIXTY FIVE | Arriving _____ on _____. Please arrange to meet me there. |
| SIXTY SIX | DX QSLs are on hand for you at the _____ QSL Bureau. Send _____ self-addressed envelopes. |
| SIXTY SEVEN | Your message number _____ undeliverable because of _____. Please advise. |
| SIXTY EIGHT | Sorry to hear you are ill. Best Wishes for a speedy recovery. |
| SIXTY NINE | Welcome to the _____. We are glad to have you with us and hope you will enjoy the fun and fellowship of the organization. |