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|  | EMERGENCY MEASURES RADIO GROUP |
|  | OTTAWA ARES |

Two Names - One Group - One Purpose

Message Handling

Course Introduction

Course Number: EMRG-411

Course Name: Message Handling

Instructor Led: Optional

Prerequisites:

- EMRG-402 The 4 C's of Communications
- EMRG-404 Introduction to EMRG

What You Should Learn From This Course:

- From this course you should understand the difference between tactical and formal messages, how to send and receive tactical messages and how to treat the privacy of information you may hear or read.

Recommended Reading:

- EMRG-407 Logging
- EMRG-520 Basic Message Form
- EMRG-521 ICS213 General Message Form
- EMRG-522 Formal Message Form (Includes instructions for filling in the form)
- Industry Canada RIC-21 - Study Guide for the Restricted Operator Certificate With Aeronautical Qualification (Excellent reference for proper communications practices)

Information Management

Message handling is about more than just sending and receiving messages. It is also about;

- knowing what to say and what not to say
- who to share information with and who not to
- how to exchange information effectively & efficiently
- logging the information exchange

Dealing With The Media

- The media is looking for a story and to share information with the public. They are trying to do their job.
- EMRG does not provide information to the media. If asked for information, direct the media to the City of Ottawa or Red Cross information person, or to the person you report to in your location.
- EMRG members can talk about EMRG, so a good knowledge of EMRG-404 Introduction to EMRG is helpful.
- Although amateur radio is not encrypted, the information you hear and relay is not necessarily public

Others

- Random people may arrive at your location with traffic to be sent, or requests for information.
- Your responsibility is to the site you have been assigned to. If you are unsure of what to do, contact the Net Control and ask for direction.
- People with requests for information about family members should be directed to the Red Cross.

Requests For 911

- If you are requested to contact 911, ask if there is a working telephone first. If there is a phone, it is best to talk directly to the dispatcher.
- If there is no working telephone, call the EMRG net controller and ask them to call 911. They will phone 911 and relay the information.
- Do not route requests for 911 through the EOC, unless the Net Controller decides there are no other options (no working phone at NCS)

Tactical Vs Formal Messages

Formal messages are not needed for most “Real-Time” Tactical Communications:

- Direct conversations between third parties
- Life-safety matters when timing is critical
- Most routine task assignments
- Most routine task completions
- Most routine resource coordination
- Record routine exchanges as line-items in your Communications Log (EMRG-501 ICS 309)

Use Of Message Forms

- In an emergency or disaster, most of the support roles will be performed by staff who normally have other jobs, or by volunteers such as Red Cross or Salvation Army.
- Most information is local and will be handled on FM voice or data
- Messages will be tactical, usually short, making requests for more water, blankets, an ambulance or replying to a request for information.
- Clients will not be familiar with formal message forms such as the ARRL/RAC Radiogram. Formal message forms will only be used when interfacing with the National Traffic System (NTS).
- The City of Ottawa does not use an official message form.

Message Form Options

- Messages do need to be written down, in order to hand them off to the recipient.
- Using full sheets of paper is wasteful and ripping paper into pieces means a message may get treated as scrap.
- EMRG has 4 options for writing messages;
 4. EMRG-520 Basic Message Form
 5. EMRG-521 ICS 213 General Message Form
 6. EMRG-522 Formal Message Form
 7. Standard Office Memo Forms

EMRG-520

Basic Message Form

- EMRG Basic Message Form provides a simple form that is intuitive for the client and EMRG members.
- Based on the ICS 213 General Message form, with the signature and reply sections removed.
- Two versions of Basic Message Form;
 4. EMRG-520-2 Two message forms per sheet
 5. EMRG-520-4 Four message forms per sheet

Print out as many pages of either form as required and cut out the individual message forms on each page.

| | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| TO: | POSITION: | |
| FROM: | POSITION: | |
| SUBJECT: | DATE: | TIME: |
| MESSAGE: | | EMRG-520-4 |
| | | |

| | | |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| TO: | POSITION: | |
| FROM: | POSITION: | |
| SUBJECT: | DATE: | TIME: |
| MESSAGE: | | EMRG-520-4 |
| | | |

EMRG-521

ICS 213

General Message Form

- The Incident Management System (IMS) includes a set of standard forms.
- One of these forms is ICS 213, the General Message Form.
- As IMS is integrated into client operations, the use of these forms will become more common place.

| GENERAL MESSAGE | | |
|-----------------|-------|---------------------|
| TO: | | POSITION: |
| FROM: | | POSITION: |
| SUBJECT: | DATE: | TIME: |
| MESSAGE: | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| SIGNATURE: | | POSITION: |
| REPLY: | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| DATE: | TIME: | SIGNATURE/POSITION: |

EMRG-522 Formal Message Form

The Formal Message Form is not typically used, but will be required for any messages that pass through the National Traffic System (NTS). Instructions are included with EMRG-522.

| FORMAL TRAFFIC MESSAGE FORM | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|----|---------------------|------|-------------------|------|------------|------|
| NR | PRECEDENCE | HX | ORIGINATING STATION | CK | PLACE OF ORIGIN | TIME | DATE FILED | |
| TO: _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| _____ | | | | | | | | |
| Signature: _____ | | | | | | | | |
| RECEIVED FROM | | | DATE | TIME | SENT/DELIVERED TO | | DATE | TIME |

EMRG-522

Standard Office Forms

- Logging incoming and outgoing radio traffic with a time stamp is key to keeping a record of the information. EMRG Log Sheet 501 or equivalent.
- For incoming messages that require hand off to the recipient, a phone message pad provides a good solution. The duplicate version allows a record to be kept by the radio operator.
- For short incoming or outgoing messages, a standard telephone single sheet message pad provides space for tactical messages and includes space for date, time, and TO/FROM information.
- Another option for incoming or outgoing messages, where a duplicate and lots of writing space is required, is an Inter Office Memo pad. These are available with a printed sequential number as well.

Sample Message Forms

A blue 'PHONE MEMO' form with a vertical title on the left. It includes fields for TO, FROM, OF, DATE, TIME (a.m./p.m.), PHONE, and FAX. A large section is labeled 'MESSAGE'. At the bottom, there is a 'SIGNED' field and a row of checkboxes: PHONED, CALL BACK, RETURNED CALL, WANTS TO SEE YOU, WILL CALL AGAIN, WAS IN, and URGENT. The Blueline logo and model number D50976 are at the bottom left.

Available in a spiral book with 400 duplicate messages, 4 per page. (Blueline D50976)

Available in pink or yellow and with different formats, but similar information.

A yellow 'MESSAGE FOR' form. It has fields for 'WHILE YOU WERE OUT', 'OF', and 'PHONE NO.'. Below these is a table with four columns: 'TELEPHONED', 'RETURNED YOUR CALL', 'CALLED TO SEE YOU', and 'PLEASE CALL'. The bottom section includes 'MESSAGE:', 'DATE', 'TIME', and 'RECEIVED BY' fields. The Grand & Toy logo is in the bottom right corner.

A white 'Inter Office Memo' pad with a blue border. It features a header with 'WRITE IT! DON'T SAY IT!' and a red sequential number '34155'. Below the header are several horizontal lines for writing. At the bottom, there is a 'SIGNATURE' line. The Blueline logo and model number DC231 are at the bottom left.

Inter Office Memo pads have lots of writing space and they are available with a printed sequential number as well. (Blueline DC231)

Numbering Messages

- Put a serial number on your outgoing messages.
 - If you need a starting point, use sequential numbers starting at 1.
- Put the ORIGINATORS serial number on incoming messages.

Message Basics

- Do NOT reformat incoming messages; handle all incoming messages as received
- **ABC**, **A**ccurate, **B**rief, **C**lear messages in plain language, provide efficient emergency communications
- If someone else has written the message, read it through before they leave to make sure you can read it, you understand it and there is no information missing, such as proper destination.

Your Rights

As the Sender

- say as little as possible, yet convey all of the meaning
- Send only as fast as you could write
- Insert Breaks to confirm the message is getting through
- It's OK to ask the originator to make the message more concise and less ambiguous. Work with them to make a better message.

As the Receiver

- It's OK to ask for a “repeat” if you miss any part of a message
- It's OK to ask the sender to slow down
- It's OK to insist that a message have a clear originator and recipient before accepting the message.

Self Test

1. Who are you likely to be sending messages to / from?
2. How do you deal with a request to call 911?
3. What is the difference between formal and tactical messages and when do you use each?
4. How do you decide what kind of message form to use?
5. How do you deal with a request for information from someone other than those in question 1?
6. What information **MUST** be logged?

Answers

1. City Staff, Red Cross or Salvation Army volunteers.
2. Use a local telephone, or else try going through net control if no phone is available.
3. Formal traffic requires word counts and precedence, and is sent out of the area via the NTS.
 - Most local messages are tactical. Tactical information, but not the actual message text is logged.
4. If a message needs a reply, use EMRG-521.
 - If you need to keep a copy, use a duplicate memo form.
 - EMRG-520 is the basic standard form.
 - Formal traffic uses EMRG-522.
 - (Understand the concept, don't worry about the form numbers)

Answers continued

- If from the media, refer them to the person to whom you report. Also check before releasing information to the general public.
- Time, Originator, Destination, what the message is about.

www.emrg.ca

The EMRG web site provides information related to Amateur radio emergency communications, specifically as it relates to the City of Ottawa.

- Project Information
- Newsletters
- Upcoming Events
- Documentation
- Links to related information

Information: **training @ emrg . ca**