

## Radiograms

Across the top of all radiograms is what is known as the message preamble. In the top left hand side of the preamble is the message number which is assigned by the first transmitting station. (Most hams start each year or month with the number 1.

Directly to the right of the message number is the precedence or importance of the message for use in net handling. Most messages are Routine or R in CW. There is also Welfare, Priority and Emergency message precedence. The precedence is assigned by the first station to send the message and good judgement should be exercised in assigning the proper designator.

Directly to the right of the R, W, P or Emergency precedence are called HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS, if any, these are optional.

- HXA-followed by a number example HXA 40 means Collect landline calls authorized if within 40 miles. If no number follows the HXA then Collect Call delivery is authorized regardless of distance.
- HXB-followed by a number means cancel message if not delivered within that many hours of the filing time...a service message should be sent to the originating station. Service Messages will be addressed in another future forum.
- HXC-Means report date and time of delivery to the originator.
- HXD-asks that you report the identity of the station you receive the message from as well anyone you relay the message to, or the method, date and time of delivery back to the originator.
- HXE-Get a reply from the addressee.
- HXF-followed by a date asks you to hold delivery until that date.
- HXG-means delivery by mail and or toll phone delivery not necessary. If toll or expense would be incurred by your station to deliver this message. Cancel and service the originating station.

To the right of any handling instructions is the call sign of the originating station. This is not necessarily the station now sending the message. This is the station who first sent the message over amateur radio.

To the right of the station of origin is the CHECK of the message. This is a word group count, usually less than twenty-five as a good radiogram is less than 25 word-groups in length.

Do not be afraid or confused by the counting of word-groups. If in preparing your message for transmission or in receiving a message you can become used to copying five word groups to a line of text you will find the check easy to verify.

Numbers, ciphers or mixed groups of numbers and letters count as one word group each. As mentioned last week we use only an X sent on voice modes as X RAY as our only punctuation in radiograms. An XRAY counts as one word-group.

To the right of the CHECK is the PLACE OF ORIGIN which is the town and state of where the message was started. Not necessarily the same as the station of origins location as we will later see.

The last item on the top line is the date/time of the messages filing, an example is 2305z April 27. It is considered unnecessary to include the year. This concludes the precedence. An example could read as: Nr1 R HXG 21 KA4MAP Webster, KY 2305z April 27,

Following this is the name and address the message is going to. Including hopefully a valid phone number.

This is followed by the TEXT. The actual text of the message is written without punctuation. Use an X sent on voice as "X RAY" to show any sentence breaks.

At the bottom is the signature of the person who originated the message, not necessarily an amateur operator.

A telephone number in the text, NOT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER IN THE ADDRESS, WHICH IS NOT PART OF THE CHECK, counts as three word groups, The area code is one, the prefix the second and the last four as the third word group. Examples of other word group counts are as follows:

- New York City is 3 word groups.
- NYC is one word group.
- Numbers spelled out FIFTY SIX count as two word groups, numbers sent as numbers 56, count as one.
- The name H. O. Townsend counts as three word groups.
- The amateur call, KA4MAP counts as one.

Let's put our knowledge to use and build a radiogram and demonstrate its transmission.

It's 6:45 PM Sunday Evening Joe Ham, NA4LID is resting at home, getting ready to join the Kentucky Traffic Net on 3.960 MHz. at 7:00.

His phone rings and it is Sam Helper, the local Red Cross Chapter President. He tells Joe that Happy Hollow Hospital needs some blood from Heavenly Hills Red Cross's blood bank but they are having telephone problems and are unable to reach them directly. He explains the situation and Joe takes note of all the important information. Joe checks his message log and finds that he last sent message Number 22. He then begins to write...

Nr 23 Emergency HXE NA4LID 30 Happy Hollow Ky. 2250z May 17

John Meanswell

Heavenly Hills Red Cross

123 High Hill Rd.

Heavenly Hills Ky. 40001

502 432-9876

Happy Hollow Hospital needs Ten Pints of AB Negative Blood X Emergency Here requiring surgery X Our Blood supply Exhausted X contact Jill Bleedwell RN 502 567-1234 Please Reply

Sam Helper

Happy Hollow Red Cross

If you notice in this case it did take more than 25 word groups to get the necessary information across. If possible messages should be less than 25, but we used this example to show that sometimes there are exceptions.

Joe checks into the KTN at 2300z and lists his one emergency traffic for Heavenly Hills. A ham in that area takes the traffic and receives a reply for Joe to return to Sam at the local Red Cross.

Let's examine an abbreviated format devised by the ARRL called numbered radiogram texts which are in common use and save much time in transmission and reception.

The first noticeable change when using these texts is in the PREAMBLE at the check which is preceded by ARL and then the check count. Example ARL 3.

This signifies that a spelled out number in the text corresponds with an ARRL numbered text on the list. This list Form CD-3 is in common circulation in amateur publications and can be obtained from this station as well as many other amateurs.

An example follows...

Message Nr 1 R W1AW ARL4 Newington CT May29

John Q. Ham AA4XYZ

123 Anywhere Rd.

Somewhere KY 12345

502 987-6543

ARL Fifty Three Card

John Amateur

You can see how this can expedite traffic handling. The actual text reads as: Received your Card. It is appreciated many Thanks. This would have given a check of 10 if sent without use of the numbered texts. Again any station desiring a copy of this list, can obtain one from myself or many other amateurs just by asking.

Source: Kentucky Amateur Radio Web Site – [www.kyham.net](http://www.kyham.net)