

General instructions for served agencies to complete the IMS Form 213-R are provided on the reverse side of the form. Note Item #1 states 'Do not fill in the shaded areas of the form. These are reserved for the radio operator'. The intent of this document is to provide instructions for radio operators.

Note that served agencies might only provide radio operators with standard IMS 213 forms with little handling instructions.

Preamble	IMS Form 213-R							
	Number	Precedence	Handling	Station of Origin	Check	Place of Origin	Time Filed	Date Filed
		E P R W						
	1. Incident Name			2. Operational Period				
Number	<p>Every message should have a number. Keep a sheet, your communications log, with a consecutive list of numbers, beginning at 1, by your radio. When a radiogram is written, complete all parts of the preamble except the number. When you send the ICS 213-R form, assign a number to it from the number sheet, crossing out numbers on the sheet as they are used and making a notation, after the number, of the station to whom the message was sent and the date. Most traffic handlers start with number 1 at the beginning of each year.</p> <p>Say the message NUMBER figures one digit at a time.</p>							
Precedence	<p><b>The precedence is completed by the served agency and included here for completeness.</b> Every message has a precedence, and it is normally "Routine" (R).</p> <p>It is a separate part of the preamble and is transmitted as such, not as part of the number. Other precedences are "Priority" (P), "Emergency" --never abbreviated, and "Welfare" (W). Other precedences are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R - Routine</li> <li>• W - Welfare, for incoming our outgoing health and welfare traffic.</li> <li>• P - Priority, for messages having a specific time limit, official messages not in the emergency category, press dispatches and emergency traffic not of the utmost in urgency, and notice of death or injury in a disaster area</li> <li>• EMERGENCY - (always spelled out) - indicates a message having life or death urgency to any person or group of persons which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities.</li> </ul>							
Handling Instructions	<p><b>Optional</b> cues to handle a message in a specific way. Most messages do not contain handling instructions. They are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HXA <i>number</i> - Collect landline delivery authorized by addressee within <i>number</i> miles. If no number, authorization is unlimited.</li> <li>• HXB <i>number</i> - Cancel message if not delivered within <i>number</i> hours of filing time; service originating station.</li> <li>• HXC - Report day and time of delivery to originating station.</li> <li>• HXD - Report to originating station the identity of station from which received, plus date, time, and method of delivery.</li> <li>• HXE - Delivering station get reply from addressee, originate message back.</li> <li>• HXF <i>number</i> - Hold delivery until <i>number</i> (date).</li> <li>• HXG - Delivery by mail or landline toll call not required. If toll or other expense involved, cancel message and service originating station.</li> </ul> <p>The HX prosign will be inserted in the message preamble before the station of origin, i.e.:</p>							

	NR 207 R HXA50 W1AW 12... If more than one HX prosign is used, they may be combined if no numbers are to be inserted; otherwise the HX should be repeated. On phone, be sure to use phonetics for the letter or letters following the HX prosign, to ensure accuracy.																																				
Station of Origin	Is the call sign of the radio station from which the message was first sent by Amateur Radio, and is included so that handling stations will be able to communicate with the originator if something interferes with the prompt handling or delivery of the message.																																				
Check	Is the number of words, numerals and punctuation characters, <b>except</b> the last ‘.’. This ensures the message is intact, like a parity check in data. Count individual words, punctuation signs, and letter/number groups. Remember to perform the word count check very carefully. The loss of a single word could have a radical effect on the meaning of the message.  Classic radiograms limit the word count to 25. In modern day, it is unlikely that served agencies are trained to limit their message to 25 words.																																				
Place of Origin	Is the name of the town from which the message started, not necessarily the location of the radio station of origin. The preamble of a message written in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario might read as follows: NR 457 R VA3WM 21 NOTL ONT 2057L JUNE 11. If a message is sent to your station by mail or not written in person, the preamble should show the place the message came from. If the message came to Niagara-on-the-Lake by mail from Ottawa, Ontario, the preamble would read: NR 457 R VA3WM 21 OTTAWA ONT 2057L JUNE 11																																				
Filing Time	Is the time the message is received at the station that it sending. Standard practice is to use Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), but local time is acceptable by suffixing the 24 hour time format with ‘L’ for local.. This part of the preamble is <b>optional</b> with the originating station.																																				
Date	The year, month and the day that the message was filed at the originating station.																																				
<b>Boxes 1 – 10</b>	<b>These are completed by the served agency and must be handled verbatim, including any grammer, spelling errors, etc. Radio operators must not change any of these fields.</b>  <b>EXERCISE MESSAGES:</b> It is customary to indicate within the text of such messages the word ‘EXERCISE’. Using ‘EXERCISE’ as the first and last groups of the text helps alert listeners to the nature of the content to avoid undue alarm. You need to count ‘EXERCISE’ in your word count check.  See guidance for communicating message TEXT after this table.																																				
<b>Message trailer</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">8. Name/Signature of Sender</th> <th colspan="3">9. Position/Contact Info of Sender</th> <th colspan="3">10. Date/Time Sent</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> <td colspan="3"> </td> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Received From</td> <td>Date</td> <td>Time</td> <td>Sent To</td> <td>Date</td> <td>Time</td> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	8. Name/Signature of Sender			9. Position/Contact Info of Sender			10. Date/Time Sent												Received From	Date	Time	Sent To	Date	Time												
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Received From	Date	Time	Sent To	Date	Time																																
Received From	Call sign or individual from whom you received the message and date and time of receipt. Time may be either your local time or UTC time. Make sure the date agrees with the time. (Remember UTC time is ahead of EST and can cause the date to roll forward).																																				
Date	The year, month and the day that the message was filed at the receiving station.																																				
Time	Is the time the message is received at the station that it sending. Standard practice is to use Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), but local time is acceptable by suffixing the 24 hour time format with ‘L’ for local.																																				
Sent to	Call sign you sent to, passed the message to, or to whom you delivered it, with date and time. Also good to note delivery method for your own reference. (i.e., via phone or left on voice mail). Always leave your																																				

	call back number if message was left on voice mail!
Date	The year, month, and day message was sent.
Time	Is the time the message is sent to the next or relay station. Standard practice is to use Universal Coordinated Time (UTC), but local time is acceptable by suffixing the 24 hour time format with 'L' for local.

Guidance for communicating message TEXT

**1.3.1 PUNCTUATION per [ARRL CHAPTER 1 - THE ARRL MESSAGE FORMAT](#)**

PUNCTUATION characters are not used in the text except as follows:

**/:** The slash, "/", is used to separate characters within a group, as in 304/BA. Since the "/" is part of the group it does not qualify as a separate group for the check. Although usually not used as a group by itself (a space on the left and on the right), if so used it would be counted in the check.

**X:** The letter "X" used to denote a period. The letter "X" is never used as the last group of the text. The "X" is a separate group and IS counted for the check.

**R:** The letter "R" is used in place of a decimal in mixed figure groups, as in 7013R5(7013.5), or 146R670 (146.670). Since the "R" is part of the group it does not qualify as a separate group for the check. (The inclusion of the "R" makes the group a "mixed group" for transmission on voice.)

**OTHER PUNCTUATION** is spelled out (in order to avoid confusion with prosigns used in the transmission of the message) as in "QUERY" for a question, "DASH" to separate special number or mixed groups, "EXCLAMATION", "COMMA", etc. (Hyphens are NOT used in telephone number groups or anywhere else in the text.) Such punctuation words are separate groups and ARE counted for the check.

**1.3.4 COUNTING WORD GROUPS FOR THE CHECK**

The number value to be entered in the "CHECK" in the preamble of the message is the total number of groups in the text between the start and end prosigns (but not counting the prosigns). An easy rule to remember about counting word groups: ANY GROUP OF ONE OR MORE CONSECUTIVE CHARACTERS WITH NO INTERRUPTING SPACES, WITH A SPACE BEFORE IT AND AFTER IT, IS COUNTED AS ONE GROUP.

Such a group may be all letters, all numbers, or any mix of numbers, letters, or slashes (/), so long as there are no spaces within the group. Each word, group of connected digits, connected mixed characters, spelled punctuation word, "X", or ARL constitutes one group for the purpose of calculating the total count to enter in the check section of the preamble.

The prosigns "BREAK", or <BT> on CW, at the start and end of the text are **not counted**.

**1.3.5 EXERCISE MESSAGE TEXTS**

EXERCISE messages: It is customary to indicate within the text of such messages the words "TEST MESSAGE", or "EXERCISE". Together, the "TEST" precedence and "TEST MESSAGE" in the text alert those receiving the message to the exercise nature of the content. It is suggested that use of the word "EXERCISE" as the first and last groups of the text help make this clear to any listener even if the entire message is not copied, thus preventing undue alarm.