

**NTS HANDBOOK
for the
BRITISH COLUMBIA/YUKON TRAFFIC NET**

**MIKE VE7DXD
2008/2009**

**BCYTN
Meets daily on 3,716 kHz SSB
Summer 0230 UTC & Winter 0330 UTC
Liaises with BCEN and RN7**



Table of Contents

Definition of Formal NTS Traffic	1
Radiogram Examples	1
Preamble	1
Address	2
Text	3
Signature	3
Received From and Sent To	3
Originator's Notes	3
Handling Instructions	4
Precedence	4
E - EMERGENCY	4
P - PRIORITY	4
W - WELFARE	4
R - ROUTINE	4
NTS ARL Messages	5
Group One for Possible "Relief Emergency" Use.....	5
Group Two Routine Messages.....	6
Phonetic Alphabet	7
Punctuation.....	8
Pro-words.....	8
Basic Radiogram	9
HX and Notes	10
Service Message	11
Book Traffic	12
Suggested Book Traffic Radiogram	13
Exercise Radiograms	14
Suggestions for Efficient Traffic Handling	15
Addendum	16
Delivery Criteria.....	16
Traffic Handling - Dealing with Errors.....	16

March 2008

This first edition of the NTS Handbook is designed to give sufficient information for an amateur radio operator to send and receive NTS traffic.

The content of the Handbook will be added to as necessary.

Revised: April 5, 2008
September 25, 2008
January 31, 2009

Preamble

NUMBER	PRECEDENCE R, W, P, E	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
--------	--------------------------	----	-------------------	-------	-----------------	------------	------

Number - This will be your message number if you are the originator of the traffic. It will also be the message number of the traffic you are receiving. Only numbers should appear in this box. Do not place a zero in front of a number as this has no value whatsoever.

Precedence - Circle the letter that indicates order of importance of the message. R is routine, W welfare, P priority and E emergency. Emergency traffic has priority over all other traffic and must be handled first.

HX - The letters HX will be followed by letters C to G. These letters indicate the handling instructions that are applied to the message. The list of handling instructions are to be found on page 4. Not all radiograms will have HX instructions.

Station of Origin - This will be the call sign of the originator of the traffic.

Check - This box contains a number that corresponds to the number of words in the text. If the letters ARL are placed in this box with a number then an ARL message will be included in the text.

Place of Origin - This is the actual place where the message started from, not necessarily the location of the station of origin. For example, if you send a message for a person in a town that is not your own, you use the person's own town. It is really the location of the "Signatory", and not necessarily the originating ham. Add the Province/State after the place of origin.

Time Filed - Indicating a time in this box is optional but should a time be given the time zone must be added. The preferred time for NTS traffic is Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). If local time is indicated the letter L should be inserted after the numbers.

Date - Month and day are all that should be entered, the year is not included.

Address

TO:

.....

.....

PHONE # (.....)

The address should contain full name, complete address with postal code and telephone number with area code. If the message is from ham to ham all that may be required is a call sign and telephone number.

Text

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Most radiograms have five lines with each line having five places for the text. This makes it easy to confirm the **Check** before going on to the next section of the radiogram.

Signature

SIGNATURE

The form of the signature is the choice of the originator of the traffic. The signature may be a call sign, name or combination of both if the originator is a ham. Members of the public may add one or more names if the message is from a family.

Received From and Sent To

RECEIVED FROM SENT TO

This part of the radiogram to be filled out by the person handling the traffic.

Originator's Notes

The originator of the message may have issued special instructions that they wish to be included in the radiogram. It may be instructions to deliver the message by a certain time or date or they may wish the reply to be sent via email. Special instructions known as op notes should be placed in the **Notes** box.

Notes are a formal part of the message and are sent **AFTER** the signature, prefaced with "OPNOTE", and are sent before stating the "end of message". Notes are **NOT** counted in the "check" count of the message.

The information given so far has been a very basic approach to completing a radiogram. The various sections will be dealt with in more depth.

Handling Instructions

- **HXA**--(Followed by number) Collect landline delivery authorized by addressee within...miles. (If no number, authorization is unlimited.)
- **HXB**--(Followed by number) Cancel message if not delivered within...hours of filing time; service originating station.
- **HXC**--Report date and time of delivery (TOD) to originating station.
- **HXD**--Report to originating station the identity of station from which received, plus date and time. Report identity of station to which relayed, plus date and time, or if delivered report date, time and method of delivery.
- **HXE**--Delivering station get reply from addressee, originate message back.
- **HXF**--(Followed by 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.

If the radiogram has **HX ...** in the preamble some action is requested. The instructions **HXB to HXE** require a service message to the station of origin.

Precedence

E - EMERGENCY

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 of instructions vital to relief of stricken populace in emergency areas. When in doubt, do not use it.

P - PRIORITY

This classification is for a) important messages having specific time limit. b) official messages not covered in the emergency category c) press dispatches and emergency related traffic not of the utmost urgency d) notice of death or injury in disaster area, personal or official.

W - WELFARE

This classification refers to either an injury as to the health and welfare of an individual in the disaster area that indicates that all is well. Welfare traffic is handled only after all emergency and priority traffic is cleared.

R - ROUTINE

Most traffic in normal times will bear this designation. In disaster situations, traffic labelled routine should be handled last or not at all.

NTS ARL Messages

These are the abbreviations used within NTS. If sending messages overseas, or into the CFARS or MARS systems, please use plain English, unabbreviated. Spell the numbers out at all times, (e.g. **ARL Sixty One**, not ARL 61). The letters ARL are inserted in the check and in the text before the spelled-out numbers.

Group One for Possible “Relief Emergency” Use

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 property damage here. Do not be concerned about disaster reports.
FIVE	Moving to new location. Send no further mail or communication. Will inform you of new location when relocated.
SIX	Will contact you as soon as possible.
SEVEN	Please reply by Amateur Radio through the amateur delivering this message. This is a free public service.
EIGHT	Need additional mobile or portable 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.
ELEVEN	Establish Amateur Radio emergency 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 telephone 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 the 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.

Emergency/Priority messages originating from official sources must carry the signature of the originating official.

Group Two Routine Messages

FORTY SIX	Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come.
FORTY SEVEN	Reference your message number ___ to ___ delivered on ___ at ___ UTC.
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 _____.
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 QSL's 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.

Use ARL numbered messages whenever possible.

Phonetic Alphabet

Phonetic Word List adopted by the International Telecommunication Union

A	Alpha	N	November
B	Bravo	O	Oscar
C	Charlie	P	Papa
D	Delta	Q	Quebec
E	Echo	R	Romeo
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra
G	Golf	T	Tango
H	Hotel	U	Uniform
I	India	V	Victor
J	Juliet	W	Whiskey
K	Kilo	X	X-ray
L	Lima	Y	Yankee
M	Mike	Z	Zulu

The use of standard phonetics makes the spelling of words easy to understand.

Punctuation and Pro-Words

Punctuation

The following are the most common characters used in message handling.

X	in place of a period (Never placed at the end of message)
R	in place of a decimal
/	spoken as “slash”
\	spoken as “backslash”
?	spoken as “query”
.	used only in website and email addresses, spoken as “dot”
_	used in website and email addresses, spoken as “underscore”
#	used in website and email addresses, spoken as “pound sign”. The pound sign is also known as the <i>octothorpe</i> is in common use in the US
@	spoken as “at” in an email address
	space used in address or website address
-	dash used in address
:	spoken as “colon” used in a website address

Pro-words

These are words spoken to indicate information. They are not written in the message and are not counted in the check.

NUMBER	Before the message number
END	End of message
BOOK OF (#)	The number of addressees added to BOOK OF. This replaces the proword NUMBER.
END BOOK OF (#)	Used at end of book traffic.
BREAK	Marks start and end of message.
I SPELL	Used to spell one group at a time.
I SAY AGAIN	To repeat for clarity.
I SAY AGAIN	To correct an error. Example: I will not arrive was sent as I will arrive....(To correct this error you will say) ---- I SAY AGAIN I will not arrive....
NO MORE	No more traffic.
ONE AND ONE MORE	End of first piece of traffic one more to come.
OVER	Transmission handed over to other station.
ROGER	Received and understood.
AFFIRMATIVE	Yes
CONFIRM	Request to confirm correct copy.
NEGATIVE	No
OVER	End of transmission, invitation to transmit.
GO AHEAD	Continue.

Basic Radiogram

Number 67	Precedence R HX	Station VE7000	Check 6
Place of Origin SOMEWHERE	Time 0430Z	Date MAR21	

To:	JOE BLOGG		
Address	567 WEST ST		
Address2			
City State Zip	EDGEVIEW BC V033X1		
Telephone	2503450023		

[Text] THANKS FOR SENDING PARCEL X 73			

Signature	ED HARRY VE7000		
Address			
Telephone, etc			

Received From		
Sent To		

Delivery of this message is the only action required

HX and Notes

National Traffic System Radiogram

Number 67 **Precedence** R **HX** C **Station** VE7000 **Check** 6

Place of Origin SOMEWHERE **Time** 0430Z **Date** MAR 21

To: JOE BLOGG VE7QQQ
Address 567 WEST ST.
Address2
City State Zip EDGEVIEW BC VOR3X1
Telephone 2503340023 CALL AFTER 6:00PM LOCAL

[Text] THANKS FOR SENDING PARCEL X 73

Signature ED HARRY VE7000
Address OPNOTE Call after 6pm local. Discard message if not delivered by March 25
Telephone, etc

Received From

Sent To

Notes Call after 6:00 pm local. Discard message if not delivered by March 25

This radiogram has three instructions that must be adhered to.

1. The handling instructions **HXC** require a service message back to the station of origin.
2. If the message cannot be delivered by March 25 it can be discarded. A service message back to the station of origin with an explanation might be in order here.
3. The delivery of this message must be made after 6:00 p.m. local time.

Service Message

This service message is in response to the previous radiogram number 67.

National Traffic System Radiogram	

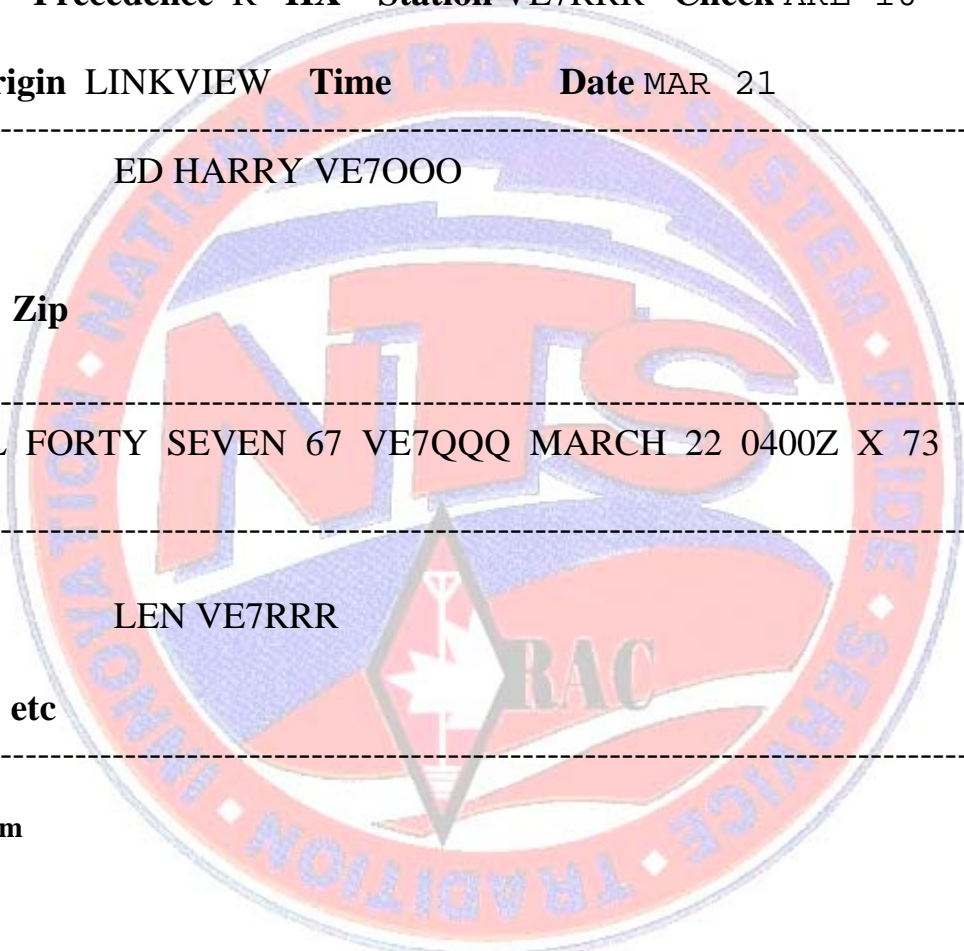
Number	3
Precedence	R HX
Station	VE7RRR
Check	ARL 10
Place of Origin	LINKVIEW
Time	
Date	MAR 21

To:	ED HARRY VE7000
Address	
Address2	
City State Zip	
Telephone	

[Text]	ARL FORTY SEVEN 67 VE7QQQ MARCH 22 0400Z X 73

Signature	LEN VE7RRR
Address	
Telephone, etc	

Received From	
Sent To	
Notes	



Book Traffic

If the same message is being sent to more than one person the radiogram can take the form of book traffic.

The following radiogram illustrates book traffic.

National Traffic System Radiogram							
Number	BOOK 2	Precedence	R HX	Station	VE7000	Check	ARL 4
Place of Origin	YORKTOWN	Time		Date	MAR 15		
To:							
Address							
Address2							
City State Zip							
Telephone							
[Text]	ARL	FIFTY	X 73				
	123	13 WEST ROAD	NEWTOWN BC	6043421234		JOE	
	124	450 W LANE	EVERTON BC	2506575454		JOE	
Signature							
Address							
Telephone, etc							
Received From							
Sent To							
Notes							

Note the different format when sending or receiving book traffic

Exercise Radiograms

To avoid any confusion or misunderstanding certain additions to messages passed during exercises must be adhered to.

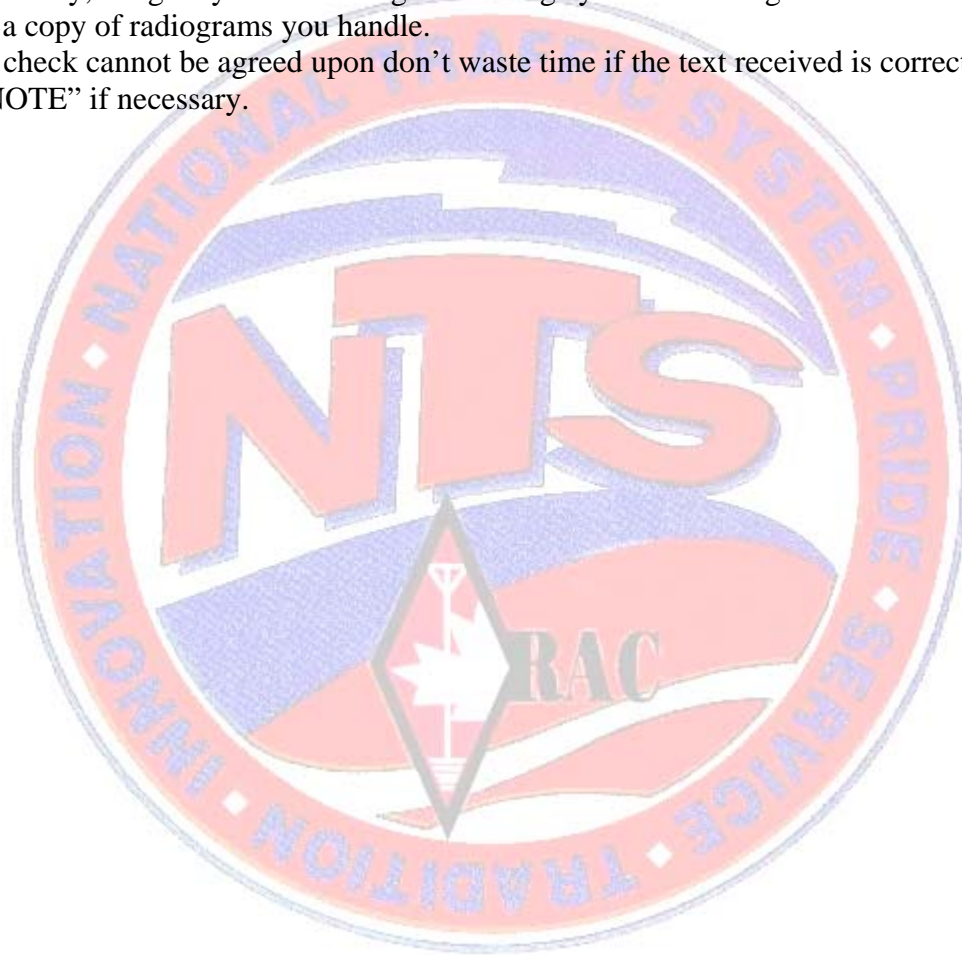
National Traffic System Radiogram		
Number	45	Precedence EXERCISE E HX Station VE7XYZ Check ARL 7
Place of Origin	ANYWHERE	Time Date MARCH 31
To:	EOC WESTVIEW	
Address		
Address2		
City State Zip		
Telephone		
Email		
[Text]	EXERCISE ARL THIRTEEN ARL TWENTY FOUR EXERCISE	
Signature	ED VE7XYZ	
Address		
Telephone, etc		
Received From		
Sent To		

The precedence must have the word EXERCISE placed in front of the letter to let any listening station understand that the entire radiogram contains exercise information only.

The text must start and end with the word EXERCISE. Once again this avoids any confusion on the part of a listener who may tune in to the exercise frequency in the middle of the text.

Suggestions for Efficient Traffic Handling

1. Use only recognized pro-words
2. Use standard phonetics for spelling and during poor band conditions.
3. Pause between each word when dictating the text.
4. Ask for fills do not guess what you have missed.
5. Listen for interruptions during the message, un-key the microphone after every two words.
6. Use “break for ...” at the end of the pre-amble, address and text.
7. Honour all handling instructions.
8. Make sure you have copied radiogram accurately before acknowledging receipt.
9. Send slowly, imagine you are writing the message you are sending.
10. Keep a copy of radiograms you handle.
11. If the check cannot be agreed upon don't waste time if the text received is correct. Add an “OPNOTE” if necessary.



Addendum

Email and Website addresses

When including email and website addresses in the text the following format should be adhered to.

anyone@yahoo.com will be spoken as anyone at sign yahoo dot com This gives an additional count of 5 in the check.

www.members.shaw.ca/brasskey will be spoken as (letter group) www dot members dot shaw dot ca slash brasskey This gives an additional count of 9 in the check.

Delivery Criteria

A message is not considered “delivered” if left on an answering machine, voice mail or email as there is no confirmation that the addressee has received it.

If the handling instructions ask for confirmation of delivery one cannot say for sure the message was delivered if left on an answering machine. The delivery instructions HXG request a service message back to the station of origin if the original message cannot be delivered to the addressee.

Traffic Handling - Dealing with Errors

The person handling the traffic does **NOT** make any changes to the content of the preamble or text. The traffic must be passed as received. There are however certain circumstances when the traffic handler knows for sure there are errors in the text or preamble.

For example, if a piece of emergency traffic being handled indicated in the text the location of the emergency as being in error (wrong Province/State) and if passed as received would lead to possibly loss of life, the operator now has to make a decision on what action to take.

Remember the text must not be changed so the first option is to add an “OPNOTE” to the radiogram explaining the possible error to the addressee. The other option would be to make an attempt to contact the station of origin for clarification of the text. This action takes time and would delay any help that may be required.

The station of origin and the originator of the traffic have the responsibility of ensuring the accuracy and legal content of the message.

If you receive something that is obviously illegal (which should not have been transmitted in the first place) then service the message back with an “OPNOTE” attached.