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## Cupertino Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Topic: Message Handling and Situation Reporting

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# Message Handling and Situation Reporting



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# Message Handling

## *Two Levels of Communications*

### ***Passing traffic on behalf of a served agency***

- Pass the traffic exactly as written. Your job is to get the message to the destination as quickly as possible, not to understand it.

### ***Self-originated messages***

- These messages are not written and a written response may not be required. In this case, you control what the text of the message will be. The phrasing is up to you.

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# Message Handling

## *Self-originated messages*

- ***Informally originated*** -- These are messages based on your observations or information/inquiries you receive that you believe should be passed on for action.

Example: Resident inquiring into the status of a clinic  
A person reporting a gas leak  
A report of flooding

- ***Situation Reports*** -- These are more structured messages that report on the situation that exists where you are assigned. They are based on your observations or information you receive.

Example: Preliminary Damage Assessment Report

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# Message Handling

## *What do Situation Reports cover?*

- Fire Hazards
- Utility Hazards
- Access Hazards
- Injuries
- Other observed conditions or information that you believe someone would be interested in receiving in light of the emergency.
  
- Also, its ok to pass “all clear,” “no problems,” etc., if that is the case.

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# Message Handling

## *Anatomy of a Message*

- **Message ID** -- Assigned by the NCS Operator
- **Precedence** -- determines the urgency of the message (Emergency, Priority, Welfare, Routine)
- **Destination** -- If omitted, deliver to EOC Planning or Ops Section
- **Date/Time** -- Time the message was created. If omitted, receiving station enters the Date/Time the message was received.
- **Subject** -- Short Title
- **Message Text** -- Description of the situation. Includes:
  - » **Report Status** -- (initial, follow-up, final, correction)
  - » **Location** -- Include the neighborhood or street name; Include major cross-street

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# Message Handling

## *Precedence (Urgency)*

- **Emergency** -- Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons. Includes official messages from welfare agencies requesting supplies, materials, or instructions vital to the relief to the stricken populace in emergency areas. When in doubt, DO NOT use this designation.
- **Priority** -- Important messages having a specific time limit, official messages not covered by *Emergency*; emergency-related traffic that is not of the utmost urgency.
- **Welfare** -- Traffic that is either an inquiry to or advisory from a disaster area as to the health and welfare of an individual
- **Routine** -- During a disaster, should be handled last

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# Message Handling

## *Report Status*

- **Initial** -- This is the first message you send when making a situation report. If you have **EMERGENCY** traffic, then pass this traffic as your first message. If you only have PRIORITY traffic, wait for all **EMERGENCY** traffic to be passed.
- **Follow-up** -- This is the second and subsequent messages you send. Pass your PRIORITY traffic when NCS calls for it. Reference the Message ID assigned to your *Initial* message.
- **Final** -- Let NCS know this is your final message because you are going off-line, being relieved, etc.
- **Correction** -- Use this status when you are amending a previously sent message. Reference the original by *Report ID*.

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# Message Handling

## *Who does what?*

### ***Sending Station***

- Creates the message with minimally the (i) Message number, (ii) Precedence, (iii) Subject, and (iv) Text.
- Delivers the message slowly, with breaks.

### ***Receiving Station***

- Records the message as sent.
- Acknowledges receipt of the message. May ask for fills or repeats.
- Keeps related messages together.
- Routes the message as directed.

### ***NCS Operator***

- Acknowledges stations with traffic and prioritizes by precedence.
- Ensures both sending and receiving station are ready to exchange traffic.
- Assigns the Message ID.

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# Message Handling

## *Sending an Emergency Report*

**KN6PE:** “Net Control, this is KN6PE with EMERGENCY Traffic for EOC”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, acknowledged. EOC, are you ready to copy traffic?*

**EOC:** “EOC is ready”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, your message ID is CD-29. Send your traffic to the EOC.*

**KN6PE:** “EOC, This is Message CD-29.  
Subject is: House Fire.  
Messages is: House fire at 12345 Woodhill Court. Cross-street  
is Prospect and Stelling. Break.”

**EOC:** “OK, Continue (with the message)”

**KN6PE:** “One person is trapped inside. Area water pressure  
appears to be low. End of Message. This is KN6PE”

**EOC:** “Acknowledged. This is W9BJX, EOC, back to net.”

**NCS:** *Other stations with emergency traffic, please identify now.*



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# Message Handling

## *Sending an initial Situation Report*

**KN6PE:** “Net Control, this is KN6PE with Priority Traffic for the EOC”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, acknowledged. EOC, are you ready to copy traffic?*

**EOC:** “EOC is ready”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, your message ID is CD-30. Send your traffic to the EOC.*

**KN6PE:** “EOC, This is Message CD-30.

Subject is: Initial Preliminary Damage Assessment Report.

Location is: Pinebrook Neighborhood.

Message is: Power is out in the neighborhood. Two houses off their foundations. Six houses with broken windows. Break.”

**EOC:** “OK, Continue (with the message)”

**KN6PE:** “One tree fell and is completely blocking the East end of Pinebrook Court. 45 houses surveyed. End of Message. This is KN6PE”

**EOC:** “Acknowledged. This is W9BJX, EOC, back to net.”

**NCS:** *Other stations with priority traffic, please identify now.*



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# Message Handling

## *Sending a follow-up Situation Report*

**KN6PE:** “Net Control, this is KN6PE with Priority Traffic for the EOC”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, acknowledged. EOC, are you ready to copy traffic?*

**EOC:** “EOC is ready”

**NCS:** *KN6PE, your message ID is CD-34. Send your traffic to the EOC.*

**KN6PE:** “**EOC, This is Message CD-34.**

Subject is: Follow-up to Message number CD-30.

Message is: Tree cleared from Pinebrook Court. All access is restored. End of Message. This is KN6PE”

**EOC:** “Acknowledged. This is W9BJX, EOC, back to net.”

**NCS:** *Other stations with priority traffic, please identify now.*

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# Message Handling

## *Guidelines*

### ***As the Sender...***

- During an emergency, say as little as possible, yet convey all of the meaning
- Send as fast as you can write it
- Insert Breaks to confirm the message is getting through

### ***As the Receiver...***

- Its OK to ask for a “repeat” if you miss any part of a message
- Its OK to ask the sender to slow down

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# Message Handling

## *Preliminary Damage Assessment Drill*

- When: Saturday, 2/9/02, 9:30am to 10:30am
- Where: Operate from your home location
- Who: All CARES members, one NCS, one EOC
- What:
  1. Pick three messages using last 3 characters of your call sign: KN6PE: E=5, P=16, 6=6;
  2. Select Message #s 5,  $5+16=$  21,  $21+6=$  27
- How:
  1. Net is called at 9:30a, take check-ins
  2. Over next 1/2 hour, CARES members send messages to EOC based on the precedence
  3. On-air critique at about 10:15am
  4. Secure the net