

## RACE S Notes for 04/09/2008

### News and Announcements

#### 1) Upcoming Events:

4/26-27 – La Vuelta de Bisbee Bike Race  
5/3 - CARA Hamfest  
5/10 – Benson Safety Day  
5/15 – Ft Huachuca Safety Day

2) Mission Complete – Not till the paperwork is done and the MCU properly secured. Just a reminder that when you return from a mission to fill out a mission gas log to be submitted in one of the envelopes you will find on the clipboard in the cab. After you are plugged back in, make a quick walk around to make sure everything is secure inside and outside. On our last mission, someone inadvertently turned on the curb side scene lights from inside the cab. Thank goodness for the battery charger as they were still on 4 days later. The truck was put away during daylight so it was not obvious that they were still on.

#### Training:

On our last net we did a short demonstration with a sample message between KD7YOZ and NJ7C. Tonight we will specifically look at the preamble of the message. The preamble is the section of the message where all the administrative details of the message are recorded. There are eight data elements or fields in the preamble, two of them are optional:

Element # 1 is the message number. This is the number assigned by the operator who first puts the message into NTS format. While any alphanumeric combination is acceptable, generally traffic handlers use a numeric sequence starting with the number 1 at the beginning of the month, or year.

Element # 2 is the Precedence. The precedence tells each traffic handler or operator the relative importance of or how urgent a message is. Within NTS format, there are four levels of precedence:

*Routine* – abbreviated by the letter “R”. Most amateur traffic is handled using this precedence; it's for all traffic which does not meet the requirements of a higher precedence.

*Welfare* – abbreviated by the letter “W”. This precedence is for an inquiry as to the health and welfare of an individual in a disaster area or a message from a disaster area that all is well.

*Priority* – abbreviated by the letter “P”. This precedence is for important messages with a time limit; official messages not covered by the EMERGENCY precedence or notification of death or injury in a disaster area. This is usually associated with official traffic to, from or related to a disaster area.

*EMERGENCY* – there is no abbreviation for this precedence; the word EMERGENCY is always spelled out in full. This precedence is for any message having life and death urgency, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of a regular communications facility. This includes official messages of welfare agencies requesting supplies during emergencies, or other official instructions to provide aid or relief in a disaster area. The use of this precedence should be limited to traffic originated by agency officials. If there is any doubt as to the use of this precedence, it should NOT be used. Means other than Amateur Radio should be included in the delivery options. EMERGENCY messages have immediate urgency. They should take priority

over any other activity and should be passed by the best means available with the cooperation of all stations.

\* **EXERCISE MESSAGES:** Messages in the ARRL format passed for test and exercise purposes may be given a precedence preceded by the word "TEST", as in "TEST R", "TEST P", "TEST W", or "TEST EMERGENCY". It is customary to indicate within the text of such messages the words "TEST MESSAGE", or "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. In some exercises, the life of the message may be terminated when the exercise period is terminated, i.e., any such messages are not handled after the exercise. Consult with the ARE S/RACE S/NTS group conducting the test to determine if such messages should be filed, handled and delivered afterwards to permit a full evaluation of the exercise.

\* **SERVICE MESSAGES:** The precedence of a SVC message should be the same as that of the message being serviced. SVC ahead of a message number indicates a service message sent between stations relative to message handling, or delivery. Since they affect timely delivery, they are handled before routine messages. SVC is not a precedence.

Element # 3 is for handling instructions. This is an optional field used at the discretion of the originating ham. I did not use it in my example and will leave it for a future discussion. Do not use handling instructions unless a particular need is present. Handling instructions are used to instruct the relaying and/or delivering operator to handle the message according to the following codes (Refer to ARRL CD 218, pink card.). If used, handling instructions must stay with the message to the point of delivery.

Element #4 is the Station of Origin – This is the call sign of the first operator to put the message into NTS format.

Element #5 is the Check – The check is the number of words in the text. This excludes the preamble, the address and signature. We will cover this also in more detail in a future net. After receiving a message, the traffic handlers count the words in the message and compare the word count to the Check in the Preamble. If the two numbers do not agree, a re-read of the message may be necessary to detect the error. If, while writing it down, you put five words per line it is very easy to count your words and verify your check.

Element #6 is the Place of Origin – This is the city and state although city and county are also acceptable where the message originator lives. This may not be the city and state of the amateur but of the person who originated the message.

Element #7 is the Time Filed – This is also an optional field unless the handling instruction Bravo is used. Although I have not covered handling instructions tonight, handling instruction Bravo means cancel if not delivered within a designated number of hours and used in conjunction with Time Filed.

Element # 8 of the Preamble is the date. This is usually the ZULU date, Month and day of the month, the message was first placed into the National Traffic System.

Prepare to copy the preamble again. Message follows:

NR 5 ROUTINE KD7YOZ 10 DOUGLAS AZ 0300Z MAR 26

That's it for training tonight, now let's go down the net for questions and/or comments.

*Bob*

Robert L Hollister

Thought for the day:

At the end of mourning, there is still sadness, but it is a wistful sadness that is tempered by the happy memories that we still possess.