

Guide to Handling Third Party Messages from Shelters

This document illustrates how a shelter message is transformed from the raw input to a finished radiogram or radio-email message. The example is for a message to a person in another state. The examples include:

- Input transcribed to the standard ARRL radiogram form
- The message as transcribed into a Flmsg input screen
- The standard text format for voicing or NTS-Digital
- Formatting the message for sending by radio-email (Winlink)

This document does not cover radiogram procedures in any depth. The details for properly formatting and voicing radiograms is in the Knox County Radiogram Tutorial that may be found elsewhere on the site.

The next page shows the Knox County modified ARRL FSD-244 form with the input filled in by a person who is at the shelter. Immediately below the input is how an operator would put the raw information into the radiogram format using the standard ARRL radiogram form. Some items to note:

- The time is converted to UTC. Be sure that the date is also UTC.
- Optional blocks in the Preamble are labeled "Opt." This radiogram appears to be time sensitive so it is important to have the time that the sender submitted the message. Also, if a large number of messages are being generated, the time is important so that the operator can work by FIFO.
- This radiogram is asking for a confirmation of delivery, HXC.
- The only non-alpha/numeric character that is permissible in a radiogram is the slant bar (/). Therefore the # in the address is eliminated. If the word "number" is important, the # could be replaced by the word NUMBER.
- The email address would be written as shown using ATSIGN and DOT.
- In the text, the periods are replaced with the letter X (x-ray). There is no X after the salutation or last sentence. QUERY is used for a question mark.
- There is no specific place on the ARRL radiogram for the signature so common practice is to place the signature at the lower right of the message area. All radiograms must have the sender's signature.
- All radiograms must have a city, state and zip code for the addressee for routing purposes. The telephone number is important but not essential as is an email address. The radio operator may also use the NTSD Parser software for zip code lookups if the sender does not have that information.

Knox County ARES/RACES Amateur Radio Welfare Message

To: *Melissa Oddbod*
213 Washaway Drive #3
Bentpass, OR 97707

Phone Number: *1-999-555-1515*

Email: *Melissa@rmail.com*

Your name: *Alice Oddbod*

Check up to two as appropriate: (Message should not exceed 25 words including punctuation)

	ARL ONE	Everyone safe here. Please don't worry.
	ARL TWO	Coming home as soon as possible.
	ARL THREE	Am in _____ hospital. Receiving excellent care and recovering fine.
	ARL FOUR	Only slight property damage here. Do not be concerned with disaster reports.
	ARL FIVE	Am moving to new location. Send no further mail or communications. Will inform you of new address when relocated.
	ARL SIX	Will contact you as soon as possible.
<i>X</i>	ARL SIXTY FOUR	Arrived safely at: <i>the St. George Shelter</i>
<i>X</i>	Added Text:	<i>I hope to be home in 3 days. Love Alice</i>
Time <i>3:35 PM</i>	Date <i>2/20/2016</i>	Telephone <i>1-207-555-1212</i>
Signature <i>Alice Oddbod</i>		

(Opt.)

(Signatory Location)

(Opt.) (UTC)

(UTC)

NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
5	W	C	KB1ZUN	ARL 18	ST GEORGE ME	2035	FEB 20

TO MELISSA ODDBOD
 213 WASHAWAY DRIVE 3
 BENTPASS OR 97707

PHONE NUMBER 999 555 1515

E-MAIL | MELISSA ATSIGN RMAIL DOT COM

THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT	
AMATEUR STATION _____	PHONE _____
NAME _____	E-MAIL _____
STREET _____	
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____	

ARL	SIXTY	FOUR	THE	ST
GEORGE	SHELTER	X	I	EXPECT
TO	BE	HOME	IN	3
DAYS	X	LOVE		
ALICE				

FROM	DATE	TIME	TO	DATE	TIME
REC'D	SENT				

If the radiogram is to be relayed digitally e.g. using NBEMS, placed on the NTSD BBS, etc. it may be entered into Flmsg as shown in the example below. Flmsg has helps for Precedence and HX. When “CK” is pressed, Flmsg will automatically format the radiogram message text (if there are syntax errors) and will compute the check.

The screenshot shows the Flmsg software interface for creating a radiogram message. The window title is "ARRL radiogram" and the file name is "new.m2s". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Message Fields:** SVC (checkbox), *NR (5), *PREC (WELFARE), HX (HXC), *STN ORIG (KB1ZUN), CK (ARL 18), and a "ck" button.
- PLACE OF ORIG:** ST GEORGE ME
- TIME FILED:** 2035
- *MON DY:** FEB 20
- *TO:** MELISSA ODDBOD, 213 WASHAWAY DRIVE 3, BENTPASS OR 97007
- TEL:** 999 555 1212
- OP NOTE:** EMAIL MELISSA ATSIGN RMAIL
- Standard Format:** A checked checkbox.
- ARL MSG:** A button.
- TXT:** A large text area containing the message text: "ARL SIXTY FOUR THE ST GEORGE SHELTER X I EXPECT TO BE HOME IN 3 DAYS X LOVE".
- SIG:** ALICE
- OP NOTE:** (Empty field)

Flmsg provides a standard text output (File – View – Text) that can be used as an aid for voice or cw transmission, or can be inserted in an email. Any traffic handler will readily understand the format.

```

5 W HXC KB1ZUN ARL 18 ST GEORGE ME 2035 FEB 20
MELISSA ODDBOD
213 WASHAWAY DRIVE 3
BENTPASS OR 97007
999 555 1212
OPNOTE EMAIL MELISSA ATSIGN RMAIL DOT COM
BT
ARL SIXTY FOUR THE ST
GEORGE SHELTER X I EXPECT
TO BE HOME IN 3
DAYS X LOVE
BT
ALICE
AR

```

Since the sender also included the addressee's email, the message may also be sent via the Winlink system. The radio operator must be fairly confident that the recipient is in an area that is unaffected by an outage. It is advisable to ask for a confirmation of receipt.

For composing as a Winlink radio-email message, the subject line must be clear that this is a personal message from Alice Oddbod. The recipient probably has no idea what or who kb1zun@winlink.org is and may put the message into the trash folder without reading.

To: melissa@rmail.com

Subj: Radio-email message from Alice Oddbod

Arrived safely at the St George Shelter. I expect to be home in 3 days.

Love,

Alice

This message was dated February 20. The message has been relayed from the shelter to your email address via a combination of ham radio and regular email. This was required as our regular services in Maine are currently out due to an ice storm. Alice would appreciate a confirmation of the receipt of this message. Just hit "reply" on your email program. It is important that the subject line of the message is preserved as it contains the //WL2K prefix that is required to ensure that the message is accepted for delivery by radio.

Thanks,

Eric KB1ZUN

If there is concern that the email might not get through and the message is important, you may also send the message via Winlink and NTS.