# Incident Command System

## Voice
## Traffic Handling

# Addendum 1a

# Operator Notes
## &
## Format Variations

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This addendum is to add additional skills over the basic WX4PBC's ICS-213 Traffic Handlers user's guide. This will introduce you to adding operator notes known as "Op-Notes" to the ICS-213 Radio Message and their use.

As in the saying "Well this is definitely a government operation" there will be other ARES/RACES groups using a variation to the PBCDARES ICS-213 Radio Message form. After all, the PBCDARES Preferred ICS-213 is itself a variation.

This would come into play in a large scale event such as we saw in Hurricane Sandy along the NE Coast. We too may be faced with inter-agency and or intra-county events. We could find ourselves unable to communicate smoothly while passing traffic.

It is a standard practice to use the ICS-213 message form throughout the country but, each served agency has the ability to modify its use to fit their needs. Therefore, we must be able to recognize different formats and be able to work within them and convert them when sending their traffic to our served agencies and vice-verse.

Variations may include groups using "plain talk" while others use the standard ICS-213 message without a Preamble but add some information found in our preamble at the end of the message body or signature in the form of "Op-Notes" or operator notes. Others will use a format closer to the ARRL NTS format to include Preamble Handling Instructions. Still others may add the "handling" instructions as a "Op Note"


## Operator Notes

Operator Notes known as "Op Notes" are additional information not part of the original message and is not included in the "Check Number". An "Op Note" may be added at the end of the header / address section, after text message or after the signature. The "Op Note" may be handling instructions such as "**Deliver to Named Recipient Only after 0900**" **"Return Reply Required"** or the information that we use in the preamble such as **"MSG 1 R WX4PBG 23**. This would indicate Original Message Number **1** Precedence **Routine** Originating Station **WX4PBC** Check **23.** Regardless of where the operator adds an "Op Note" they will state "**Op Note**".

If using an "Op Note" in a ICS-213 message format, it is suggested operator send it after message body and before the signature as in below example.

An "Op Note" may be added by the original message author and added to the traffic but not within or counted as part of the message body. **Example: "Deliver to Named Recipient Only after 0900**" Further, an "Op Note" may be added by the sending station as a note to aid the receiving station separate of the original message. Example; **Recipients FCC Call is WX4PBC**

The "Op Note would be used in a message that the sent Check number did not correspond with received Check number and the difference could not be remedied. Keep received check number and add a back slash then your check number **Example: Original Check was 12 but your count was 13. Send in Preamble as 12/13 or in "Op Note"**

This would require an "Op Note" after message body and before message body "Break".

**Example: "Op Note" Check 12/13 voiced as "Op Note, Check, figures one two stroke figures one three"** Then finish with the **"Break"** to signal end of text and message body and alerts receiving station signature to follow as in basic users guide.

## Receiving a Radio Message with an "Op Note"

As a receiving station, you would copy the message as any other received message. If not using a recognized format, copy as it is received. If you are the destination station, transcribe into local PBCDARES preferred Radio Message format to be delivered to recipient. If you are a relay station with-in your local served agency area and relaying to another station outside of local area and they use a different format, send message as received.

**"Op Note"** You may transcribe the message from one format to another but you can not change the header / address or message body of the message you received.

## Example of "Op Note" message

| GENERAL MESSAGE | | |
|---|---|---|
| TO: Edward Smith | POSITION: EB Manager | |
| FROM: Robert Davis | POSITION: Flight Director | |
| SUBJECT: Helo | DATE: Nov 1-2012 | TIME: 9:00 am |

MESSAGE:

We have 2 helo's on stand-by for your use if you need them.

We are waiting for the weather to improve to go airborne.

I have 1 helo assigned for your use.

<span style="color:red">The message ends here. The Op Note is below not counted as</span> part of message.

( Op Note; Msg 1 R WX4PBC 34 0908 Nov 1 2012 )

This format is used by some ARES /RACES groups.)

| SIGNATURE: Robert Davis | POSITION: Flight DEirector |
|---|---|
| REPLY: | |

| DATE: | TIME: | SIGNATURE/POSITION: |
|---|---|---|

This example shows no Preamble sent but preamble information sent as an "Op Note"
This format is used by some ARES/RACES groups

## WebEOC

WebEOC is used by local and state Emergency Operation Management agencies. WebEOC is a inter-agency and Intra-agency communication system not unlike a web based forum or chat room. WebEOC is in use by Palm Beach County Emergency Management agencies.

A new twist is to link WebEOC use with ECom stations. In this system, the ECom radio operator would receive the ICS-213 messages via the WebEOC system (Computer) and then send the message over the radio traffic net.

The receiving ECom radio station would receive / copy the message and if destination station, enter the received radio message into the WebEOC system. Currently, even with WebEOC this would not alter ECom procedures but only how the receiving destination station disseminates the received message.


## Handling Instructions:

This is an optional field used at the discretion of the local ECom coordinators but may be used by individual operators not familiar with local PBC ICS traffic format. PBC ICS ECom traffic format does not use handling instructions. You may hear a station use it in Preamble or added as a "Op Note".

The Handling instructions are added in this guide for your familiarization but are not used in Palm Beach County.


The handling instructions contain shorthand instructions for routine message actions. Three of the seven standard HX pro-signs may be used in emergency communications. The three are listed below:

**HXC** -- Report date and "time of delivery" (TOD) to originating station.

**HXD** – Report to originating station the identity of the station who delivered the message, plus date, time and method of delivery. Also, each station to report identity of station to which relayed, plus date and time.

**HXE** -- Delivering station to get and send reply from addressee.
When multiple instructions are used the elements are combined in the Precedence: HXCE.


## Conclusion  Op-Note

This information should help you the ECom radio operator if and when you must communicate with other non-local ICS 213 radio traffic handlers. It is not our concern as to why other groups or agencies don't use our method. They are more then likely asking the same question(s)

Our professionalism will be our ability to receive and pass on the traffic as accurately and timely as possible and just remember.." Well…This sure is a government operation" which means; Everyone does the exact same thing only differently.


73,


Ray
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