

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS FIELD REFERENCE

ICS 213 General Message

Simplex Radio Transmission Cheat Sheet

Operating principle: To pass a formal ICS 213 General Message over simplex, use standard voice radio traffic procedures. Because simplex is direct radio-to-radio communication without a repeater, transmit in a highly structured, slow, and clear manner to prevent mistakes.

Example message: Oakridge High School Shelter

STEP 1 | INITIAL CALL-UP

Before reading a long message, make sure the receiving station is ready to copy.

Sender (Shelter): "Logistics, this is Shelter Branch. I have formal traffic, ICS 213, priority."

Receiver (Logistics): "Shelter Branch, this is Logistics. Ready to copy."

STEP 2 | TRANSMIT THE HEADER FIELDS

Speak at a "writing pace" - about half your normal speaking speed. Pause briefly between blocks.

Sender: "Incident Name: Oakridge Flash Flood 2026. Break.

To: J. Evans, Logistics Section Chief. Break.

From: M. Ramos, Shelter Branch Director. Break.

Subject: Request for emergency cots and blankets. Break.

Date: Zero-eight dash twenty-two dash twenty-six.

Time: One-four-one-five. Break.

Awaiting your readiness for the text."

Receiver: "Logistics is ready for the text."

STEP 3 | TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE TEXT

Use phonetic spelling for ambiguous words, speak digits individually, and call out punctuation.

Sender: "Message begins: Oakridge High School Shelter has reached nine-zero percent capacity due to mandatory evacuations in Sector Boy.

Period.

We require one-five-zero emergency cots and two-zero-zero blankets to accommodate new arrivals. Period.

Current supply will be exhausted within two hours. Period.

Please deliver items directly to the gymnasium loading dock on Elm Street. Period. Break.

Approved by: M. Ramos, Shelter Branch Director. Over."

PHONETIC NOTE Say Sector B as "Boy" or "Bravo" to prevent confusion over simplex.

STEP 4 | ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CLARIFICATION

Simplex is prone to static. The receiving station asks for a fill when a word or figure was missed.

Receiver: "Shelter Branch, Logistics. Confirm number of blankets. Word after 'and'?"

Sender: "Logistics, Shelter, I spell two-zero-zero. Two hundred blankets. Over."

Receiver: "Logistics copies two hundred blankets. I have the complete message, tracking number one-zero-one. Out."

CRUCIAL SIMPLEX TRANSMISSION RULES

Use "Break": Say "Break" and release the Push-To-Talk (PTT) button for 2 seconds between sections.

This allows another operator to interrupt for an immediate life-safety emergency.

Speak numbers digit-by-digit: Say "one-five-zero" instead of "one hundred and fifty" so static is less likely to remove a meaningful part of the number.

Pronounce punctuation: Explicitly say words such as "Period," "Comma," or "Query" for a question mark.

Write first, talk second: Never speak an ICS 213 over the radio off the top of your head. Read it word-for-word from the completed paper form.

QUICK OPERATOR CHECK

Confirm the receiving station is ready to copy.

Read at writing pace and pause between blocks.

Release PTT briefly after each Break.

Speak figures as individual digits.

Say punctuation and use phonetics when needed.

Resolve fills before the receiver acknowledges the complete message.

Record the receiver's tracking number in the message log.

BOTTOM LINE Structure, pace, and read-back accuracy matter more than speed.