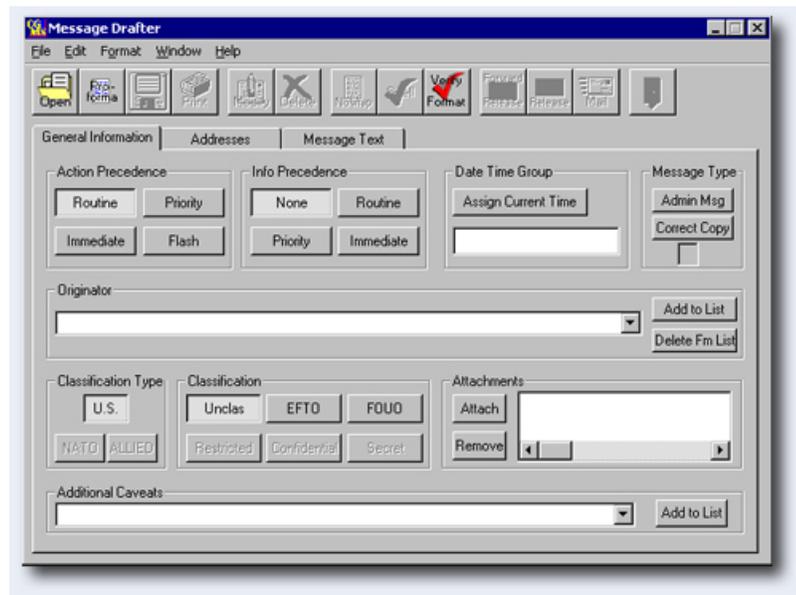


Message Format 17-6.02-P

PREPARE a Coast Guard message using proper format for drafting, as presented in the E-PME Study Guide.

Prepare a Coast Guard Message (CGMS)

You may find yourself in a position when you are required to send a message through the Coast Guard Messaging System (CGMS). There are specific requirements for how these messages are formatted. This allots a minimum amount of characters to be used to convey a maximum amount of information.



Format

This is the generic format for messages. This format specifies the exact information that belongs on each line of the message.

Format (continued)

Line #	Content
1–4	AUTODIN Routing, Security warning, Transmission Release Code, Special Handling—not used on CG circuits
5	Precedence, Date Time Group, Message Instruction
6	Message Originator (FM)
7	Action Addressees (TO)
8	Information Addressees (INFO)
9	Exempt Addressees (XMT)
11	Prosign BT
12	Message Text (In specific order)
13	Prosign BT

The format for each message line is given below:

- **Line 1–4.** Lines 1–4 contain routing information that is computer generated and transparent to message drafters. Message drafting actually starts on format line 5, the “from line.”
- **Line 5.** In Line 5, the message creator will enter, in the order indicated below, the:

- ▶ **Precedence.** The Precedence entry must always appear first on Line 5. It indicates when the message should be distributed, which is a direct function of the message’s urgency.

The Precedence entry indicates a Speed Of Service Objective (SOSO) code. This single-character code serves as general guidance for Communication Centers to process message traffic according to the precedence assigned. The SOSO times indicate the time from which a message enters in, then is transmitted out from an individual Communications Center. Potential SOSO codes are:

- Flash (Z)—As fast as possible with a goal of 10 minutes.
- Immediate (O)—30 minutes
- Priority (P)—3 hours
- Routine (R)—6 hours

- ▶ **Date Time Group.** The Date Time Group (DTG) is a unique fingerprint on each message. It is the means to identify and locate a message if you are discussing it with another person or referring to a message within another message (e.g., replying to a message). The system ensures that no two messages have the same DTG. DTGs contain day, time, month, and year. In the example 271237Z JUN 00:

- 27 stands for the day of the month.
- 1237Z is the time in Zulu (Greenwich Mean Time), followed by the month and last two digits of the year.

Format (continued)

▶ **Message Instruction.** This set of characters indicates any special circumstances related to the transmission of the message. Specifically, this set of characters will indicate if a message has been:

- Corrected (ZOJn, where n is the number of the correction)
- Retransmitted (ZDK, positioned after the date of the original message)
- Administrative type (ZYB, follows the date time group)

- **Line 6.** In Line 6, the originator will indicate from where the message is being sent. This entry will always begin with the code FM followed by the boat or facility name and the city and state of origin.

For example, a message originating from the Cutter *Deight*, stationed in New Orleans, Louisiana would contain the following Line 6:

FM CCGDEIGHT NEW ORLEANS LA//DT//

- **Line 7.** The “TO” line indicates the action addressee(s). An action addressee is not mandatory as long as there is at least one INFO addressee. There can be more than one action addressee.
- **Line 8.** The “INFO” line indicates the information addressee(s). An INFO addressee is not mandatory as long as there is at least one TO addressee. There can be more than one INFO addressee. This is similar to copying a member on an e-mail.
- **Line 9.** The “XMT” line indicates exempt addressees who are called in a Collective Address Designators (CAD), or Address Indicating Group (AIG).
 - ▶ A CAD is a single address group that represents a predetermined set of five or more activities linked by an operational or administrative chain of command.
 - ▶ AIGs are predetermined lists of action/information addressees controlled by a “cognizant authority” and used for messages containing information of a recurring or pre-planned nature.

The originator may exempt one or more of the addressees from a CAD or AIG by listing them in line nine.

- **Line 11.** In Line 11, the originator includes the code BT to indicate that the body text for the message will begin on the following line. The originator will also include the same code in Line 13 to indicate the body text for the message is completed.

Format (continued)

```
R 051415Z MAR 04 ZUI ASN-A00068000145 ZOJ1
FM COMCOGARD PERSCOM WASHINGTON DC//EPM-1//
TO ALCGENL
BT
UNCLAS //N01500// VOL CCN
ALCGENL 035/04
SUBJ: ADVANCED EDUCATION PROCESS FOR ENLISTED PERSONNEL
A. CG TRAINING AND EDUCATION MANUAL, COMDTINST M1500.10B, CH. 3
```

- **Line 12.** In Line 12, the originator composes the body text for the message. The text in the message must be placed in the following order:
 - A) Classification (Unclas, Confidential, etc.)
 - B) Special Handling (SPECAT, LIMDIS, etc.)
 - C) Special Delivery (NORFORN, ORCON)
 - D) Standard Subject Identification Code (SSIC)
 - E) Exercise Name (If applicable)
 - F) Subject Line (Should be only one line of text)
 - G) References
 - H) Paragraphs

```
ENLISTED PERSONNEL
> A. CG TRAINING AND EDUCATION
MANUAL, COMDTINST M1500.10B, CH. 3
> 1. THIS MESSAGE MARKS THE BEGINNING
OF THE ANNUAL CYCLE FOR THE
> ENLISTED ADVANCED EDUCATION
PROCESS. IN ORDER TO ENSURE CG ENLISTED
> MEMBERS ARE AFFORDED AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY TO COMPETE FOR THESE
> PROGRAMS AND TO ALIGN AND
STANDARDIZE THE SELECTION PROCESS, THE
> ENLISTED PERSONNEL DIVISION OF THE
COAST GUARD PERSONNEL COMMAND
> (CGPC-EPM), WORKING IN CONJUNCTION
WITH PROGRAM SPONSORS, HAS
> REFINED THE APPLICATION PROCESS. TITLE
10 RESERVISTS AND RETIRED
> RECALL MEMBERS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR
THESE PROGRAMS. PLEASE READ
```

Note that not every message will have all entries. Skip entries if they do not apply, but they cannot be placed in a different order.

Format
(continued)

- **Line 13.** In Line 13, the originator includes the code BT to indicate the body text for the message is completed. The originator will also include the same code in Line 11 to indicate that the body text for the message began on the following line.

```
> REGARDING THE SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY AND FOLLOW-UP ASSIGNMENTS TO  
> MSTCS LACUMSKY.  
> 4. A SEPARATE MSG WILL BE SENT FROM EACH PROGRAM DETAILING THE  
> COURSE OF STUDY AND FOLLOW-UP ASSIGNMENTS.  
> 5. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.  
> BT  
> NNNN  
>
```

Here's a sample message properly formatted for transmission.

```
5 P 151515Z JAN 00 ZYB  
6 FM CCGDEIGHT NEW ORLEANS LA  
7 TO AIG FOUR SEVEN EIGHT NINE  
8 INFO COGARD TISCOM ALEXANDRIA VA//OPS-  
9 XMT USCGC EVERGONE  
11 BT  
12 UNCLAS EFTO NORFORN //N02000//  
EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE  
SUBJ: MESSAGE DRAFTING COURSE  
A. MY 151510Z JAN 00  
1. MESSAGE TEXT  
13 BT
```

CGMS automatically formats the message.

There are some formatting requirements for the text within the report.
The text:

- Cannot contain tabs
- Cannot be allowed to auto wrap at the end of the line
- Must be limited to 69 characters per line
- Can only contain approved characters

The report must also contain a statement authorizing release of the message over the Internet, if appropriate. This authorization must be formatted as "INTERNET RELEASE AUTH," and the last line of the message text must be Internet release is authorized.

***Approved
Characters***



ONLY the following characters have been approved for use in official record message traffic:

Character	Symbol
Apostrophe	'
Colon	:
Comma	,
Parenthesis	(
Question Mark	?
Quotation Mark	"
Slant Bar	/
Hyphen	-
Period	.

The "At Sign" @ may be used on Coast Guard messages only, but must be spelled out on messages going outside the organization or to ships that are underway.
