Region 9 Army MARS Training Topics for "on-the-air" use

TRAINING TOPIC # 26 – Message Re-File Procedures for Tributary Relay Stations

LESSON INTENT – Understand and use procedures for "re-filing" (relaying) messages.

REFERENCES –
A. **Message Delivery Procedures for Tributary Stations** by Wolff and Carrigan (11 Feb 2015)
B. **ACP-125, ACP-126, ACP-127, ACP-127 U.S. Suppl-1(K)**
C. **JM 2-203** Joint MARS Routing Indicators, October 2014

EXPECTED TIME TO DELIVER – 30 Minutes

CONTENT OUTLINE & KEY POINTS –
1. As the last (or sometimes "next to last") MARS station in the chain before the addressee, a Tributary Relay Station (TRS) is responsible for delivering a message to the addressee or to another MARS station which will deliver the message to the addressee. In the first case, the TRS will deliver the message DIRECTLY to the addressee. In the second case, proper "re-file" procedures must be followed to forward the message to an addressee THROUGH another station.

2. **DIRECT DELIVERY.** This case occurs only when the addressee is operational on the same net, at the same time as the Tributary Station (the one holding the message). Since most State or Region nets operate using Voice procedures as specified in ACP-125, those procedures are followed as described below:
   a. The station holding the message for delivery (TRS), establishes radio communications with the addressee with a "preliminary" call;
   b. A mode of transmission for the message is agreed upon (either voice or data, but data is preferred);
   c. The holding station (TRS) transmits the message **UNCHANGED** (that is, as received by the holding station) to the addressee;
   d. Confirmation of receipt by the addressee is sent using ACP-125 voice procedures.

3. **REFILE AND RELAY.** This is used when direct delivery of the ACP-127 message is not possible. The first step will be to identify (with the assistance of the NEC for the net) the station to which the message will be relayed. Once that is completed, then several changes will need to be made in order to refile the message using ACP-126 procedures. The following CODRESS message will serve as an example:

VZCZC1AB001	*(Format Line 1)*
RR UHXPBC UHXPYZ	*(Format Line 2)*
DE UHXPAE #0002 0331845	*(Format Line 3)*
ZNR UUUUU	*(Format Line 4)*
R 031840Z FEB 2015 ZYG	*(Format Line 5)*
GR 131	*(Format Line 10)*
BT	*(Format Line 11)*
[CODE GROUPS]	*(Format Line 12)*
BT	*(Format Line 13)*
#0002	*(Format Line 15)*
NNNN	*(Format Line 16)*

4. **CHANGES:**
    a. CHANGE 1: DELETE Format Line 1
    b. CHANGE 2: CHANGE Format Line 2 to the station you intend to call and relay the message through.
    c. CHANGE 3: CHANGE Format Line 3 to YOUR call sign and add YOUR message number
    d. CHANGE 4: Remove the security warning "ZNR UUUUU" in Format Line 4 and replace it with call sign of the station you want the message delivered to, preceded by the transmission instruction Pro-sign "T".
    e. Change 5: Delete Format Line 15.

5. Here's a side-by side comparison of the two (original and ACP-126) versions of the message:

    Original ACP-127 Message: *Refiled ACP-126 Message:*

    (FL1) VZCZC1AB001   [Omitted]
    (FL2) RR UHXPBC UHXPYZ   AAR4XX*****
    (FL3) DE UHXPAE #0002 0331845   DE AAR4YY NR 125
    (FL4) ZNR UUUUU   T AAR4ZZ ******
    (FL5) R 031840Z FEB 2015 ZYG   R 031840Z FEB 2015 ZYG
    (FL10) GR 131   GR 131
    (FL11) BT   BT
    (FL12) [CODE GROUPS]   [CODE GROUPS]
    (FL13) BT   BT
    (FL15) #0002   [Omitted]
    (FL16) NNNN   NNNN

    *= Call sign of station you are relaying the message to

    ** = Call sign of the final addressee station

6. **FINAL STEPS IN RELAY PROCESS:**
    a. The "holding" station (TRS) establishes communications with the station receiving the relay (Format Line 2), agrees upon the desired transmission mode, transmits the ACP-126 format message, and receives confirmation of receipt,
    b. The station receiving the relayed message then delivers it to the addressee or relays it to another station. In the case of further relays, only Format Lines 2 and 3 are changed in subsequent handoffs. Format Lines 4 and 5 are NOT changed.
    c. All stations involved in the relay and delivery of the message MUST include log entries that record movement of the message.

EXAMPLE OR PRACTICAL EXERCISE – See Example above

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION –
1. You are asked to accept a message for relay, you agree, and when you have received it, you realize that it uses and encryption key that you don't have. What do you do?
2. When you relay a message, which format lines should you never change? Why?
3. What information about the messages you handle should you keep in your log?

QUESTIONS THAT CAME UP DURING DISCUSSION – record questions that indicate less than complete understanding.