

## Precedences for amateur radiograms

Every radiogram (formal message traffic) originated by an amateur radio operator must contain a *precedence* which indicates the message's importance. The precedence, which is sent in the message header immediately after the message number, determines the order in which that message will be handled on a net. There are four precedences: EMERGENCY, P (Priority), W (Welfare) and R (Routine), in that order of handling.

Precedence	Meaning (definitions from ARRL)
<b>EMERGENCY</b> (always spelled or spoken fully)	Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities. This includes official messages of welfare agencies during emergencies requesting supplies, materials or instructions vital to relief to stricken populace in emergency areas. During normal times, it will be very rare. On CW, RTTY, AMTOR and packet this designation will always be spelled out. When in doubt, do not use this designation.
<b>P</b> ("Priority" on voice modes)	This classification is for important messages having a specific time limit, official messages not covered in the emergency category, press dispatches and emergency-related traffic not of the utmost urgency.
<b>W</b> ("Welfare" on voice modes)	This classification refers to either an inquiry as to the health and welfare of an individual in a disaster area or an advisory from a disaster area that indicates all is well. Welfare traffic is handled only after all emergency and priority traffic is cleared.
<b>R</b> ("Routine" on voice modes)	Most traffic in normal times will bear this designation. In disaster situations, traffic labelled R should be handled last, or not at all when circuits are busy with higher-precedence traffic.