

Radiograms – Frequently Asked Questions

What is a radiogram? A radiogram is a telegram sent by shortwave radio nets operating 365 days per year, 24-hours per day. These nets are sponsored by Radio Relay International and use a variety of communication technologies including voice, Morse code, and the latest, very sophisticated, digital methods.

What is Radio Relay International? RRI is an IRS registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that sponsors a decentralized, survivable communication network over amateur radio, available for public service communications in time of disaster. While cellular networks and the Internet depend on the national electrical grid and fiber optic cable backbones, shortwave radio uses only the earth's ionosphere making it independent of commercial infrastructure. Our operators are also widely dispersed, located all over the country and the world. This means RRI is always available for emergency communications regardless of conditions.

Why would someone use RRI when there is no emergency in progress? Radiograms are relayed throughout the year to exercise the network, for operator training and practice, and to maintain our equipment and facilities.

How does it work? A radiogram can enter our network from anywhere in the world, subject to international agreement and operator presence of course. It is then routed to the volunteer radio amateur nearest the addressee, who is responsible for delivering it to the addressee.

How are messages delivered? Routine messages may be delivered via telephone, e-mail, the postal service, or even by hand, in person. Higher priority messages are typically delivered via telephone or in person. Under emergency conditions involving the police, fire, or emergency services departments, printed "hard copy" and electronic delivery are both common.

What sort of message might I send? All non-commercial messages are welcome, in accordance with F.C.C. regulations. Radiograms are a great way to send birthday greetings, notes to and from summer camp, and even to play chess across the country. Besides – it's fun!

Is there a charge for this service? No charge is made for sending or receiving a radiogram. This is a non-commercial, wholly volunteer public service, sponsored by Radio Relay International.

Why is the radiogram typed with capital letters? Radiograms, like telegrams, are sent using capital letters to maintain compatibility with all known techniques including Morse code and American Sign Language that cannot easily shift between upper and lower cases.

Where can I learn more about Amateur Radio? Visit our web page to learn more:

www.radio-relay.org