

Chapter 2

TIMESAVING CORRESPONDENCE

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TIMESAVING CORRESPONDENCE

When appropriate, a simple acknowledgment or an informal comment may be handwritten or typed and returned to the sender. Keeping a copy of the correspondence or comment is not usually necessary. However, if a file copy is needed, make a copy after adding comments. Examples of timesaving methods used throughout the government are illustrated in this chapter.

Memorandum of Call

Use Standard Form 63, Memorandum of Call, to inform office personnel of a visitor or telephone call. The form is self-explanatory. (See Figure 18.)

Figure 18. Memorandum of Call

Routing and Transmittal Slip

Use Optional Form 41, Routing and Transmittal Slip, to make brief comments about correspondence or documents routed to one or more addressee. Both sides of the slip may be used.

To indicate any action for an addressee, number the appropriate block to agree with the addressee's number. A recipient may add other addressees to the slip. The slip will be forwarded, with any enclosure, to the next addressee after it has been initialed and dated. (See Figure 19.)

Figure 19. Routing and Transmittal Slip

Two-Way Memo

Use a Two-Way Memo, Optional Form 27, to send an informal message within your agency or to another government agency. OF 27, a multipart form which provides copies for both originators and addressees is designed to be sent and returned in a window envelope. After completing the two-way memo, keep a copy and send the original and the remaining copy to the addressee for return reply. (See Figure 20.)

Informal Replies

It is appropriate to indicate acknowledgments, receipt of, and answers to routine requests on original incoming letters. After adding a response to the original, return it to the sender. (See Figures 21 and 22.)

Electronic Communications

Electronic communications are used for transmitting correspondence when speed and responsiveness are important and a written record is required. While costs may be measurable in terms of on-

Figure 20. Two-Way Memo

The figure shows three overlapping forms of a Two-Way Memo. Each form is titled "UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT" and "2-Way Memo". The forms are arranged to show the front and back of the document. The top form is the front side, showing fields for "Subject", "To", "From", and "Date". It also includes a "RECEIVED" stamp area and a "RETURN TO" section. The middle form is the back side, showing fields for "Subject", "To", "From", and "Date". It includes a "RECEIVED" stamp area and a "RETURN TO" section. The bottom form is another back side, showing fields for "Subject", "To", "From", and "Date". It includes a "RECEIVED" stamp area and a "RETURN TO" section. The forms are arranged to show the front and back of the document, with the top form being the front side and the middle and bottom forms being the back side.

line access and services - and while these costs may be comparatively higher than a paper message - their value is immeasurable in terms of resources saved and enhanced timeliness.

Some government agencies have central communications centers which are responsible for ensuring the economical and effective dissemination of electronic communications. Other agencies place the responsibility on individual managers. Because the technologies consist of an everchanging, increasingly complex and sophisticated set of options, this chapter provides only a general description of some current modes of record communications. Each government organization should formalize the procedures which are unique to its record communications systems.

Teletype

Teletype provides point-to-point transmission and receipt of conventional messages between Federal, State, and local government agencies; institutions; commercial systems; and private individuals. It provides a means to transmit messages to any destination in the world via Telex, Teletypewriter Exchange Service (TWX), Mailgram, Cablegram, and Private Message Service (PMS—commonly known as the “telegram”). The type of service used, among other factors, is determined by the

communications equipment available on the receiving end.

Ordinarily, when the recipient does not possess communications equipment, a Mailgram, Cablegram, or PMS might be sent. Telex and TWX messages are sent to locations possessing either Telex or TWX terminals.

Mailgrams—This automated mail service provides for the transmission of official messages through the computerized Western Union system to post offices throughout the United States and Canada. A Mailgram processed one evening is delivered in paper form by the U.S. Postal Service the next business day.

Mailgram service allows an office to send one text to multiple addresses via the same transmission. The messages may be transmitted to recipients in private homes or business offices. Mailgrams should not be used for the delivery of messages to individuals at transient addresses (such as hotels) or for emergency or priority messages.

Cablegrams—Cablegrams are messages requiring same day or next-day delivery that are transmitted via teletype to international locations.

Figure 21. Informal Reply

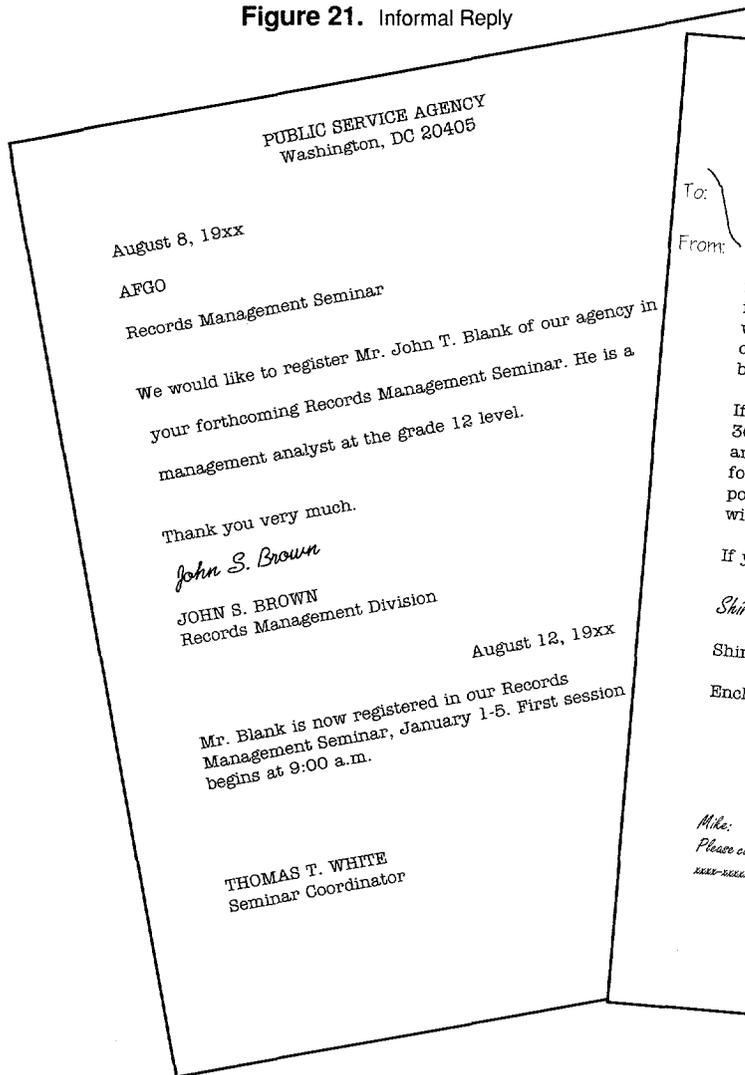
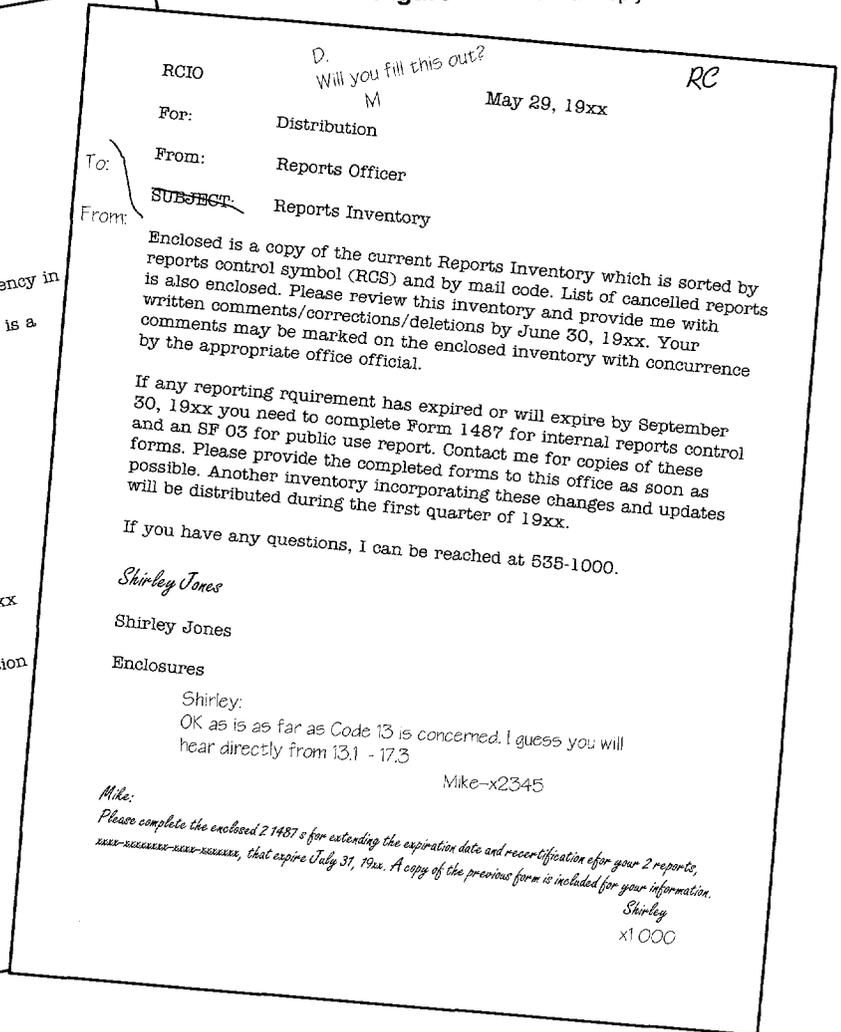


Figure 22. Informal Reply



Both Mailgrams and Cablegrams are capable of transmitting only typewritten materials; they are not suitable for the transmission of graphic materials such as charts, forms, and drawings.

Telex and TWX—Using Telex or TWX, messages transmitted by the communications facility are received even during nonbusiness hours.

Private Message Service (PMS)—While Western Union may interpret the term “telegram” to mean one of several modes of communication (e.g., messages delivered verbally over telephone lines; communicated by facsimile; or delivered in hard copy by several methods), PMS is the service whereby Western Union hand delivers a hard copy “telegram” to a Recipient. PMS is generally not used by government agencies; however, it remains a viable option.

Facsimile (FAX)

Facsimile refers to the output copy produced in the image of an original. It is the quickest and most effective way to transmit hard copy documents from point-to-point or from point-to-multipoint. It can transmit not only typewritten material but also graphics, such as charts, drawings, and photographs. The quality of hard copy originals is important because poor quality copy will not transmit clearly. Most often, maximum copy size is 8 1/2" x 11" but some agencies have the capabilities to transmit larger copy. Specific instructions are essential due to varying capabilities of different systems. Since costs, instructions and capabilities are unique to each system, each agency utilizing facsimile should establish its own guidelines and criteria. For instance, facsimile transmission should be used for official documents requiring immediate action that:

- Require an exact reproduction of size, shape, and form;
- Require a personal signature; and/or
- Cannot be transmitted by less expensive means, such as

U.S. Mail, due to transmission times or by electronic mail or teletype due to the lack of signature or alteration of form.

Guidelines might provide for authorizing the signature; the address form for items not properly addressed for transmission; and the urgency of the message.

Electronic Mail Systems

Electronic mail systems (EMS) are automated systems for the interoffice and interagency transmission of textual information. They are computerized systems which use keyboard-operated video display terminals, hard-copy terminals, personal computers or communicating processors as input-output devices. Transmission via EMS becomes more cost-effective as traffic volume increases. Agencies with EMS capability must ensure compliance with governmentwide policies and standards on Federal information processing. Since each system is unique, procedures must be specific to that system.

Information transmitted by EMS is subject to the requirements for records and information prescribed by chapters 29, 31, and 33 of Title 44 of the United States Code. The information transmitted must be created, maintained, used, and disposed of in accordance with these specifications. Depending on the character of the text, information suitable for documentation should be transferred intact from EMS to another medium—such as paper, microfilm, diskette, or computer tape—by either the recipients or the originators.

Guidelines for Use

As stated in the preceding paragraphs, each agency should issue its own guidelines and procedures for the use of its particular communications systems. These guidelines should contain conditions and criteria for use of the various systems available; precedence of types of messages (relative importance and urgency); security considerations; formatting requirements;

Figure 23. Time Zone Map



copying provisions; and official record copy designations. Figure 23, has been provided for the convenience of workers scheduling transmission times for messages.

Standard Form 14, Telegraphic Message, illustrated in Figure 24, is prescribed for preparing official Government telegrams, teletype messages, and other messages for transmis-

sion by wire, cable, or radio communications facilities. Appropriate special forms may be used in lieu of the SF 14 for messages transmitted by facsimile and for certain data messages requiring a prearranged format. Brief instructions are provided below; however, each utilizing entity should elaborate on its completion within the guidelines for its own unique systems.

Figure 24. Standard Form 14, Telegraphic Message

Name of Agency

Type the name of agency, your office or organizational unit, and your location.

Precedence

Type the proper precedence indicators for the action copy and for any information copies.

Type of Message

Indicate whether the message is single, book, or multiple-address.

Security Classification

If the message is classified, stamp the proper classification in the space provided at the bottom and top of the form.

Accounting Classification

Type the appropriate symbol or identification for internal accounting. If the telegram is to be sent collect, type "collect."

Date Prepared

Type the date on which you prepare the form.

For Information Call

Type the name, office symbol, and telephone number of the person the communications unit can contact for additional information.

Typing Guideline

Type no further than this line if using a typewriter with elite type.

Page Number and Number of Pages

Show the individual page number and the total number of pages.

| TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE | | |
|---|---|--|
| NAME OF AGENCY General Services Administration Information Resources Management Service Washington, DC 20405 | PRECEDENCE ACTION: R INFO: | SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLAS |
| ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION XYZ-1234/O/X.123 | DATE PREPARED 3-6-91 | FILE |
| FOR INFORMATION CALL | | |
| NAME John Smith, KLMN | PHONE NUMBER 354-1234 | TYPE OF MESSAGE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> BOOK <input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE-ADDRESS |
| THIS SPACE FOR USE OF COMMUNICATION UNIT | | |
| MESSAGE TO BE TRANSMITTED (Use double spacing and all capital letters) | | |
| TO: MIDWESTERN MANAGEMENT CENTER ATTENTION: JOHN DOE FEDERAL SERVICE AGENCY 4271 OAK STREET KANSAS CITY, MO 64131 URTEL 3-6-91 USE OF SF 14 "TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE" FOR ORIGINAL OF EACH PAGE OF A TELEGRAM. TYPE CARBON COPIES ON PLAIN TISSUE. FOR MULTIPLE PAGE TELEGRAMS FILL IN ALL APPLICABLE SPACES ON FIRST PAGE. ON SUCCEEDING PAGES FILL IN SPACES FOR SECURITY CLASSIFICATION, PAGE NUMBER, AND NUMBER OF PAGES. SHOW DISTRIBUTION OF CARBON COPIES ON TISSUE COPIES ONLY. SKIP A LINE AFTER SIGNATURE ELEMENT AND TYPE "CC" PLUS: WITH LEFT MARGIN. ON NEXT LINE BEGIN LISTING NAMES, TITLES, OR SYMBOLS OF INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS RECEIVING COPIES. CHECK A COPY FOR EACH ADDRESSEE. TYPE IDENTIFICATION OF OFFICE, WRITER, AND TYPIST ON TISSUE COPIES ONLY. SKIP A LINE AFTER LAST LINE OF DISTRIBUTION LISTING AND TYPE OFFICE SYMBOL, IF ANY, WRITER'S INITIALS AND SURNAME, TYPIST'S INITIALS, AND DATE OF TYPING. HARRY BROWN, KMPI CHIEF, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT BRANCH | | |
| | | SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLAS |
| PAGE NO. 1 | NO. OF PGS. 1 | |