

Sussex County ARES®

GENERAL MESSAGE (ICS FORM 213) [Jan 2013]

Purpose: The General Message form is used by:

1. Radio Operators to record incoming messages which cannot be orally transmitted to the intended recipients.
2. Command Post and other incident personnel to transmit messages to the Radio Operators for transmission via radio or telephone to the addressee.
3. Incident personnel to send any message or notification to incident personnel which requires hard-copy delivery.

Initiation of Form: The General Message form may be initiated by Radio Operators and any other personnel on an incident.

Distribution: Upon completion, the message may be hand carried to the addressee or hand carried to the incident Radio Operator for transmission.

Some examples of using ICS-213 include:

- Shelter & Hospital Status
- Declarations
- Facility Relocations
- Damage Assessments
- Situation Updates
- Resource Requests
- Any Formal Messages Originated by a Served Agency

Make sure your message is clear.

- Present the information in the proper sequence.
- Avoid jargon, Q-signals, codes, and acronyms.
- Omit unnecessary details.
- Word the message precisely, making every word count

Instructions for Completing the General Message (ICS Form 213).

ITEM/ TITLE	INSTRUCTIONS
To	The name or Unit/Person the General Message is intended for.
Position	Indicate the location where the Unit/Person is located, e.g., Ground Support Unit Leader, Simpson Camp, Communications, etc.
From	The name and location/position of sender.
Subject	Fill in if applicable.
Date/Time	List the date and time. (Use 24 hour clock system at local time)
Message Number	Assign each message a number so you can track it.

- Group Count*** Fill in the number of words in the message.
- Message** Briefly complete. Think through your message before writing it down. Try to be as concise as possible. Put only one word in each text box.
- Signature/Position** Obtain the signature of the person who initiated the message prior to transmission.
- Reply To** This section is intended to be used by the Unit/Person who receives the message to reply to your message.
- Date/Time** List the date and time. (Use 24 hour clock system at local time)
- Group Count** Fill in the number of words in the message.
- Signature** Record signature and title of person replying.

***Group Count:** This is the total number of words and letters or number groups in the text of the message. Each word or number or letter group goes in one blank space on the form. It is the word count of ONLY THE TEXT portion of the message. This includes the total number of words, letters, and number groups in the text.

- Spell out the word “period” and count it separately as a word.
- The signature does not count as part of the text.
- Telephone numbers count as three words if the area code is included or two words without an area code.
- Zip Codes count as one word or two words if zip code plus 4 is used.

Sample Message:

TRACTOR	TRAILER	CARRYING	25,000	GALLONS
LIQUID	CHLORINE	OVERTURNED	AT	ROUTE
ONE	FIVE	POINTS	LEWES	PERIOD
STATE	POLICE	AND	DNREC	NOTIFIED
PERIOD	EVACUATING	ONE	MILE	RADIUS
OF	THE	ACCIDENT	PERIOD	CAPE
HENLOPEN	HS	AND	MARINER	MS
OPENED	AS	SHELTERS	PERIOD	

BE SURE TO INDICATE IN THE FIRST LINE AND LAST LINE IF THE MESSAGE IS PART OF AN EXERCISE/DRILL!

Keep a copy for ARES® records.