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ACP 131(B)

COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTIONS OPERATING SIGNALS

ACP 131(B)

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28 April 1976

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
Washington, D.C. 20301

UNITED STATES NATIONAL LETTER OF PROMULGATION
FOR CHANGE NO. 5 TO ACP 131(B)

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For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:


DAVID L. JONES
Colonel, USA
Deputy Secretary

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Enter Change or Correction in Appropriate Column

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COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTIONS
OPERATING SIGNALS

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CHAPTER 1GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS101. Purpose

The purpose of this publication is to list operating signals and provide instructions for their use.

102. General

This publication includes:

a. Operating Signals from the following series of international civil Q code:

(1) The series QAA to QNZ inclusive, the meanings of which are assigned by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). In general, the only civil stations that will have available a copy of this series are those of the Aeronautical Service. Therefore, this series is not to be used with other civil stations unless it is known that the station concerned is familiar with the series. (Note: Stations of the Aeronautical Service are those operated in accordance with ICAO international standards and recommended practices to provide for the safety of air navigation and for the regular, efficient and economical operation of the air services).

(2) The series QOA to QQZ inclusive is reserved for the Maritime Services.

(3) The series QRA to QUZ inclusive, the meanings of which are assigned by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). In general, all civil stations will have available a copy of this series. Therefore, this series may be used with all civil stations unless the station concerned indicates its unfamiliarity with the series.

(4) The series QVA to QZZ inclusive has not been allocated to date.

b. Operating signals from the series ZAA to ZXZ inclusive of the allied military Z code. The series ZYA to ZZZ inclusive is reserved for the temporary or permanent assignment of meanings on an intra-military basis by any nation, service or command authorized use of this publication. For the convenience of assigning authorities, provision for this series (ZYA-ZZZ) is included in Chapter 5 of this publication.

c. Miscellaneous abbreviations and symbols developed or approved by ICAO for use with the series QAA to QNZ inclusive. These abbreviations and symbols, however, are authorized for use by allied military stations with any Q or Z signal subject to the use limitations, if any, of that Q or Z signal (see paragraph 103).

103. Authorization

a. The series QAA to QUZ of the international civil Q code, and the series ZAA to ZXZ of the allied military Z code, are authorized for use between allied military stations subject to the provisions of paragraph 102. Q and Z signals of these series may be used together between allied military stations.

103. (Continued)

b. The series QAA to QUZ of the international civil Q code are authorized for use between Allied military stations and civil stations, subject to the provisions of paragraph 102. The allied military Z code (ZAA-ZZZ) is not authorized for use between allied military stations and civil commercial stations.

c. Any nation, service or command may prohibit or restrict the military use, within its area of jurisdiction, of any operating signal. However, when such operating signals are received from other users, they must be recognized and acted upon.

104. Instructions

a. Action. Q or Z signals ordering or indicating that an action is to be taken (a change of frequency, for example) will be answered before the action is taken, unless the "Broadcast" method is used or the station ordering or indicating the action has indicated that an answer is not required.

b. Affirmatives or Negatives. Operating signals, as appropriate, will be used by allied military stations to convey an affirmative or negative sense...

(1) To civil stations by adding "C" (affirmative) or "N" (negative) after the Q signal and any data used with it:

Examples (of replies):

(a) QFQ C means: (Yes) The approach and runway lights are lit.

(b) QAK N means: (No) There is no risk of collision. "NO", instead of "N", is authorized for use by and to civil stations of the Aeronautical Service.

(2) To allied military stations by using the appropriate Q or Z signal:

Examples (of replies):

(a) QHZ means: (Yes) Circle the aerodrome (or go around).

(b) ZOE means: (Yes) Give me your message. I will dispose of it.

Note: In addition to the above, replies to questions from military stations may be made by using ZUE meaning Affirmative (Yes) or ZUG meaning Negative (No).

c. Blank Spaces. Blank spaces in the meanings of Q and Z signals will be completed, in the order in which they appear; however, blank spaces inclosed in parentheses normally will be completed on an optional basis only.

Examples:

(1) QBM BF6 1010Z means: Here is the message sent by BF6 at 1010Z hours.

Note: The meaning assigned QBM is "Here is the message sent by...at...hours"; therefore, as these blank spaces are not included in parentheses, all are completed, in the order in which they appear.

(2) ZKO BG2 means: I have handed over guard to BG2.

Note: The meaning assigned ZKO is "I have handed over guard (to...) (on...kHz (or MHz)) (serial number of last message received was...)"; however, in the above example, the user elected to complete only one of the blank spaces inclosed in parentheses.

104. (Continued)

d. Call Signs. Normally call signs will follow the Q or Z signal to which they refer; however, they also may precede the operating signal for separation or clarity.

e. Frequencies:

(1) When the meaning of a Q or Z signal includes the expression "on... kHz (or MHz)", the figures used alone (not supplemented by an abbreviation) always will indicate the frequency in kilohertz per second. To indicate the frequency in megahertz per second, the figures will be supplemented by the abbreviation "MHz".

(2) Provided that no confusion can arise, in those Q or Z signals whose meaning includes the expression "on...kHz (or MHz)", the circuit designator or other disguised reference, if available, will be used in place of the actual frequency.

(3) Although not provided for in the meaning of a Q or Z signal, a frequency may be used with any such operating signal by adding figures and the appropriate abbreviation ("kHz" (kilohertz per second) or "MHz" (megahertz per second)).

f. Numbered Alternates. Q and Z signals with numbered alternate meanings will be followed, without spacing, by the appropriate number to indicate the meaning intended.

Examples:

(1) QCB2 means: Delay is being caused by your slowness in answering.

Note: QCB has the following numbered alternate meanings - "Delay is being caused by...(1. your transmitting out of turn; 2. your slowness in answering; 3. lack of your reply to my...)."

(2) ZAP5 means: Work single sideband.

Note: ZAP has the following numbered alternate meanings - "Work...(1. simplex; 2. duplex; 3. diplex; 4. multiplex; 5. single sideband)."

g. Plain Language. Plain unabbreviated language is authorized for use to complete or amplify the meaning of operating signals only when no other approved method will do.

h. Questions. Operating signals, as appropriate, will be used by allied military stations to ask questions:

(1) Of civil stations, by adding the prosign \overline{IMI} after the Q signal and any data used with it;

Example: QAR 15 \overline{IMI} means: May I stop listening on the watch frequency for 15 minutes?

(2) Of military stations, by inserting the prosign \overline{INT} before the Q or Z signal to which it refers.

Examples:

(a) \overline{INT} QAR 15 means: May I stop listening on the watch frequency for 15 minutes?

(b) \overline{INT} ZDJ means: How many groups does your message contain?

104. (Continued)

i. Security. Operating signals possess no security. They must be regarded as the equivalent of plain language.

j. Separation. The separative sign (prosign II, written as a short dash) may be used to separate Q or Z signals when desired.

k. Time Groups. Time groups (including date-time groups) used with Q or Z signals always will be followed, without spacing, by a zone suffix letter (see ACP 121). Although not provided for in the meaning of a Q or Z signal, a time group (including date-time group) may be used with any such operating signal.

l. Units of Measurement. When units of measurement are desired for use which differ from those in the meaning of an operating signal, an appropriate abbreviation will be used (see Chapter 4).

m. Class of Emission (Chapter 6). When using operating signals concerning radio equipment or its use, e.g. QSU, QSW, ZTD, ZTE, ZTJ, ZTM, the class of emission/type of transmission may be indicated by use of the tables in Chapter 6. The operating signal ZTG is used for this purpose unless Chapter 6 is referred to in the meaning of the signal.

Examples:

(1) QSU F1 means: Send or reply on this frequency use frequency shift keyed telegraphy.

(2) ZTM ZTG A3A means: I am unable to use single sideband, reduced carrier, telephony.