FIELD GUIDE · NO. 26

Emergency Radio Call Format

A calm, organized message is easier to understand than a long, rushed one.



FROM THE BOOK

1. Listen for several seconds before you transmit, so you do not interrupt a channel already in use. Think about what you want to say before you press the button.
2. Hold the radio a few inches from your mouth. Press the transmit button, pause briefly, then speak. Starting to talk at the same instant you press the button often cuts off the first words.
3. Speak clearly, at a normal pace. State who you are calling, if known. Give your location first, then a brief description of the situation, how many people are involved, and what assistance is needed.
4. Keep messages short. Release the button, listen for a reply, and avoid unnecessary conversation on a busy channel.
5. Packaged "range" numbers are often measured under ideal conditions. Hills, forests, buildings, and weather usually make the practical range much shorter.
6. Charge or replace batteries before you need the radio, and practice with it. Confidence comes from having already used the equipment.

PRACTICE IT

With a partner on the same channel (in a place radios are allowed), run a short practice call: listen, pause, give a location, a brief situation, and a request, then release and listen.