

## **5 FAH-2 H-420 TELEGRAM DELIVERY PRECEDENCE**

*(TL:TEL-3; 12-13-2002)*  
*(Office of Origin: IRM/APR/RG)*

### **5 FAH-2 H-421 AUTHORIZED PRECEDENCE DESIGNATORS**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

The authorized precedence designators, FLASH, IMMEDIATE, PRIORITY and ROUTINE, indicate to the Communications Center the relative order for transmitting, processing and delivering telegrams. See 5 FAH-2 H-421 Exhibit H-421, which summarizes the speed with which telegrams should be delivered to the addressee Communications Center and defines significant backlog factors.

#### **5 FAH-2 H-421.1 FLASH**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

a. FLASH is reserved for the most urgent telegrams containing information vitally affecting the conduct of foreign relations, and requiring instant action by the addressee, regardless of the time of day or night.

b. FLASH telegrams are processed with the utmost urgency and before all other telegrams. If a FLASH message is to be transmitted, all other activities should be suspended until the message has been transmitted and acknowledgments received from the relay facility and destination addressee. Upon receipt of an incoming FLASH telegram, notify the responsible action office or officer instantly, regardless of the time of day or night. Acknowledge receipt of the FLASH telegram by sending an RZ service message to the connected relay facility, as well as a ZDF service message to the originating station and BMC Beltsville.

#### **5 FAH-2 H-421.2 IMMEDIATE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

IMMEDIATE telegrams are processed and transmitted in the order received and ahead of PRIORITY and ROUTINE telegrams. Notify the

responsible office(r) immediately upon receipt during normal duty hours. If the drafting or approving officer at the originating station requests acknowledgment of an IMMEDIATE telegram, IPC personnel must obtain acknowledgment from the action addressee(s).

### **5 FAH-2 H-421.2-1 NIACT IMMEDIATE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

A NIACT IMMEDIATE telegram carries the NIACT handling symbol, IMMEDIATE precedence, and ZZK operating signal on FL-4. NIACT IMMEDIATE telegrams require immediate action, regardless of the time of day or night, and must be acknowledged. The use of the NIACT handling symbol requires the approving officer to state the justification for use of NIACT in the first paragraph of text.

### **5 FAH-2 H-421.2-2 ZZK Military IMMEDIATE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

Military telegrams requiring immediate action carry IMMEDIATE precedence and the ZZK operating signal. Telegrams from military addressees with IMMEDIATE precedence and ZZK must be acknowledged.

### **5 FAH-2 H-421.3 PRIORITY**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

PRIORITY telegrams are processed and transmitted in the order received and ahead of all ROUTINE precedence telegrams. Each post should establish its own procedures for processing PRIORITY telegrams.

### **5 FAH-2 H-421.4 ROUTINE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

ROUTINE telegrams are processed and transmitted in the order received, after telegrams of a higher precedence. Each communications center should establish its own procedures to assure timely processing of ROUTINE telegrams.

## **5 FAH-2 H-422 AFTER HOURS TELEGRAM PROCESSING**

### **5 FAH-2 H-422.1 Opening/Closing IPC**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

a. IM personnel at posts abroad must open the IPC after normal hours of operation to transmit or receive FLASH, NIACT IMMEDIATE or transmit telegrams upon the request of the post's chief of mission.

b. Under normal circumstances, IMMEDIATE and PRIORITY telegrams will not be transmitted or received after working hours. However, if IRM personnel open the IPC after normal working hours to send or receive a FLASH or NIACT IMMEDIATE telegram, lower precedence traffic awaiting transmission may be exchanged.

c. See 5 FAH-2 H-524.7-2 and 5 FAH-2 H-524.8-1 for examples of service messages for opening and closing the circuit.

### **5 FAH-2 H-422.1-1 Opening/Closing to Send or Receive FLASH**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

When a post is in storage or unattended and is an addressee on a FLASH, Beltsville will recall the duty IPC operator and wait for an RZ from the post. If IPC has not arrived to open within two hours, Beltsville will re-initiate recall, notify the Messaging Center Operator (MCO) at the Main State Messaging Center (MSMC), and issue a Recall Failure Notice Report in accordance with DTS regulations. If the post has sent a FLASH, IPC must remain open until an RZ is received from Beltsville and a ZDF is received from action addressee(s).

### **5 FAH-2 H-422.1-2 Opening/Closing to Send or Receive NIACT IMMEDIATE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

a. When a post is in storage or unattended and is an addressee on a NIACT IMMEDIATE, Beltsville will recall the duty IPC operator. Classified posts operating in storage mode must vux before receiving NIACT messages. IPC must then transmit a ZDF to the message originator. Posts must take special care to transmit ZDFs to originators because automatic opening/closure allows IPCs to send and receive telegrams without

Beltsville's assistance or knowledge.

b. For Department originated messages, if MSMC has not received ZDF acknowledgments within two hours, system controllers will notify Beltsville, recall will be re-initiated, and a Recall Failure Notice Report will be issued. If the post has sent a NIACT, IPC must remain open until ZDF is received from addressee(s).

## **5 FAH-2 H-422.2 Contacting Department Operations Center (S/ES-O)**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

Duty officers or post personnel wishing to communicate urgent information to the Ops Center should telephone first, because a telephone call can take less time than processing a telegram. Callers should then send a telegram to establish an official record of the contact. The Ops Center telephone number, (202) 647-1512, rotates through 25 lines, to enable Ops Center staff to answer all calls as quickly as possible.

## **5 FAH-2 H-423 ACKNOWLEDGMENT PROCEDURES**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

Any telegrams bearing the ZFF operating signal must be acknowledged by the receiving station(s) with a service message. This includes, but is not limited to, FLASH, NIACT IMMEDIATE, NODIS, TOSEC and SECTO telegrams. The suffix 4 in ZFF4 signifies acknowledgment requested from the communications center at the receiving station, and this satisfies acknowledgment requirements in most situations. See 5 FAH-2 H-423 Exhibit H-423 or ACP-131 (D) for an explanation of the ZFF numerical suffixes.

### **5 FAH-2 H-423.1 Acknowledgment Services**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

IPC operators should create canned RZ and ZDF acknowledgment services to expedite the acknowledgment process. A canned service contains essential transmission format lines and blank editable fields, and is stored in the telegraphic database. TERP V automatically sends acknowledgments in response to ZFF4, ZFF5, ZFF6 and ZFF RXXXXX routing indicator for post requesting acknowledgment detected on incoming

U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Handbook Volume 5 Handbook 2—  
Telecommunications

messages. If a telegraphic processor, i.e. an ACT or PCCS terminal, does not have automatic acknowledgment capabilities, the telegraphic operator must retrieve the appropriate service from the database, edit and send it. Consult the operations guide for IPC's telegraphic processor to create canned services with the necessary elements for RZ and ZDF acknowledgment services.

### **5 FAH-2 H-423.1-1 RZ**

(TL:TEL-3; 12-13-2002)  
(Uniform State/USAID)

*The RZ is named for the phonetic alphabet symbols "roger" and "zulu." "Roger" confirms receipt of the channel number that follows; "zulu" represents the ZZ prosign for FLASH precedence. The RZ acknowledgment identifies the incoming telegram by its Channel Sequence Number (CSN) on FL-1. In the example below, RUEHZZ is the routing indicator used by the STARS terminal to clear FLASH acknowledgments at Beltsville; SF0123 is the CSN of the FLASH message which was sent from the Beltsville relay station to the Sofia telegraphic processor. If the Beltsville relay station does not receive this RZ within ten (10) minutes, it will automatically send the original FLASH message again.*

*EXAMPLE:*  
VZCZCSFI209  
00 RUEHZZ  
DE RUEHSF #0038 0661158  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
UNCLASSIFIED  
BT  
UNCLAS SVC RZ SF0123 IMI SF0123  
BT  
#0038  
(EOM)

### **5 FAH-2 H-423.1-2 ZDF**

(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)  
(Uniform all agencies)

The ZDF ("message received") acknowledgment service includes the name of the receiving post, the Message Reference Number (MRN) of the cable, and the date and time of receipt. In the following example, RUEHMPI is the routing indicator used by the ATSEU terminal at the

**U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Handbook Volume 5 Handbook 2—  
Telecommunications**

Department to clear ZDF acknowledgments; STATE 222346 is the MRN; and 071204Z NOV 00 the date and time the telegram was received by Sofia's telegraphic processor.

EXAMPLE:

VZCZCSFI210

OO RUEHMPI

DE RUEHSF #0039 3121205

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

BT

UNCLAS SVC SOFIA ZDF STATE 222346 AT 071204Z NOV 00

BT

#0039

(EOM)

## **5 FAH-2 H-423.2 FLASH**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*

*(Uniform all agencies)*

a. The originating station of a FLASH telegram must receive an IMMEDIATE precedence RZ acknowledgment service from the first relay facility in the transmission path and an IMMEDIATE precedence ZDF acknowledgment from action addressee stations. Outgoing FLASH telegrams must contain the ZZ prosign on FL-2 and Z precedence prosign on FL-5. TERP V automatically prepares FLASH transmission telegrams with the correct prosigns and opsigns. If post's telegraphic processor does not automatically format FLASH telegrams with the appropriate prosigns and opsigns, the IPC operator must edit the transmission text accordingly.

b. Each receiving station in the transmission path must send an IMMEDIATE precedence RZ service to the previous relay facility in the path, as required by ACP-127 Section 151, U.S. Supplement. The destination addressee must also send an IMMEDIATE precedence ZDF acknowledgment service to the originator as required by Department of State regulations. See 5 FAH-2 H-423 Exhibit H-423.2 for an example of a FLASH telegram and the corresponding acknowledgments.

## **5 FAH-2 H-423.3 NIACT IMMEDIATE**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*

*(Uniform State/USAID)*

The IPC operator at the originating station must ensure that NIACT telegrams are transmitted with the opsigns ZZK on FL-4 and ZFF4 on FL-5. The receiving station must send a ZDF acknowledgment to the originator. See 5 FAH-2 H-423.1-2 for specific instructions in formatting the ZDF acknowledgment.

## 5 FAH-2 H-423.4 ZZK Military IMMEDIATE

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

The receiving station must send ZDF acknowledgments to military activities that originate telegrams bearing the ZZK opsign on FL-4. The ZDF acknowledgment to military telegrams includes the originating station's routing indicator, the station serial number, PLAD and date-time group. Use the operations manual for IPC's telegraphic processor to create a canned service for a ZDF service to a military activity. Follow the format in the following example:

EXAMPLE:

VZCZCSFI210

OO RUEKJCS

DE RUEHSF #0039 0661205

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

BT

UNCLAS SVC SOFIA

ZDF RUEKJCS #7654 JCS WASHDC DTG 071204Z MAR 97

BT

#0039

(EOM)

## 5 FAH-2 H-423.5 Other Telegrams

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

a. The drafter or approving officer may request acknowledgment of telegrams other than FLASH, NIACT, NODIS, SECTO and TOSEC. If acknowledgment is required, the ZFF operating signal and applicable numerical suffix must appear on FL-5 of the outgoing transmission telegram.

b. IPC personnel can either advise the drafter to include ZFF on the outgoing telegram per instructions in 5 FAH-2 H-228 or force the outgoing telegram to a hold queue in the telegraphic processor and insert ZFF on FL-5 during processing. If the ZFF numerical suffix does not apply on a particular telegram, FL-5 may contain ZFF without a numerical suffix, followed by the routing indicator of the post(s) from which an acknowledgment is desired.

EXAMPLE:

O 141640Z FEB 92 ZFF RUEHDK

## **5 FAH-2 H-423.6 Follow-Up Procedures**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform State/USAID)*

a. If the originating post does not receive an acknowledgment within a reasonable time, the originating post will follow up with an unclassified service message requesting acknowledgment or retransmit the telegram. Retransmissions should keep the same precedence as the original and should carry the operating signal ZFG following ZZH in FL-4.

b. If Beltsville does not receive an RZ service within 10 minutes of a FLASH transmission, Beltsville either requests the RZ or resends the FLASH.

## **5 FAH-2 H-424 THROUGH H-429 UNASSIGNED**

## 5 FAH-2 H-421 Exhibit H-421 SPEED OF TELEGRAM DELIVERY

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)  
(Uniform State/USAID)*

Speed of service objectives apply to the total elapsed communications handling time from when an outgoing telegram form is delivered to the originating communications center to when the telegram is available for delivery at the addressee's communications center. If FLASH or NIACT IMMEDIATE telegrams must be transmitted and received after normal business hours, the total time from opening the originating station to receipt of the acknowledgment from the addressee message center should not exceed 2 hours.

PRECEDENCE	PROSIGN	OBJECTIVE
FLASH	Z	As fast as possible, but not more than 10 minutes
IMMEDIATE	O	30 Minutes
PRIORITY	P	3 Hours
ROUTINE	R	6 Hours

### SIGNIFICANT BACKLOG FACTORS

A significant backlog is a communications delay in excess of the following standards and is measured in minutes and number of unprocessed messages. These backlog factors represent an in-station delay above normal acceptable routine flow for a single message at any position within a terminal or relay center facility. In the case of a FLASH message that is afforded special handling, any delay other than that resulting from a preceding FLASH message being transmitted is unacceptable. It should be noted that the significant backlog factors set forth below are based upon a large Embassy and should be revised accordingly for a smaller post.

PRECEDENCE	TIME IN MINUTES	NUMBER OF MESSAGES
FLASH	1	1
IMMEDIATE	15	8
PRIORITY	120	64
ROUTINE	360	192

## 5 FAH-2 H-423 Exhibit H-423 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OPSIGN SUFFIXES

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

### **ZFF Suffixes:**

Use the numerical suffixes below with the ZFF operating signal to request acknowledgment of a message from a receiving station. Per ACP-131, the ZFF opsign is not authorized for use on general messages.

- ZFF1 Acknowledgment requested from action addressees
- ZFF2 Acknowledgment requested from information addressees
- ZFF3 Acknowledgment requested from all addressees
- ZFF4 Acknowledgment requested from action addressee message center
- ZFF5 Acknowledgment requested from information addressee message center
- ZFF6 Acknowledgment requested from all addressees' message centers

### **ZDF Suffixes:**

Use the numerical suffixes below with the ZDF operating signal when responding to messages with the ZFF opsign. **Note:** ZDF service messages for Department telegrams do not include a numerical suffix. Other agencies' message centers, however, may expect the appropriate numerical suffix on the ZDF acknowledgment.

- ZDF1 Message was received by addressee at (insert date time group)
- ZDF2 Message was received by addressee's communications center at (insert date time group)
- ZDF3 Message was delivered to addressee by broadcast at (insert date time group)
- ZDF4 Message was forwarded to addressee by commercial means at (insert date time group)
- ZDF5 Message was mailed to addressee at (insert date time group)



**5 FAH-2 H-423 Exhibit H-423.2 (2)**  
**FLASH TRANSMISSION TELEGRAM AND**  
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*(TL:TEL-2; 05-23-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

MESSAGE AS RECEIVED BY NON-FLASH ADDRESSEES:

VZCZCABC124  
OO RUEHRL RUEHFT  
DE RUEHC #9214 3181131  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 131130Z NOV 00  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS FLASH 3567  
INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 7490  
RUEHFT/AMCONSUL FRANKFURT IMMEDIATE 3421  
BT  
UNCLAS STATE 109214  
E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: ACOA  
SUBJECT: SAMPLE FLASH TELEGRAM  
1. THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A TRANSMISSION FORMAT FLASH TELEGRAM. FL-2 CONSISTS OF FIVE UPPER CASE J'S, FIVE HIDDEN UPPER CASE S'S, THE ZULU PROSIGN AND ROUTING INDICATOR FOR FLASH ADDRESSEE.  
2. TERP V WILL TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE FIRST AS A FLASH TO PARIS, THEN AS AN IMMEDIATE TO BONN AND FRANKFURT. IN THE SECOND TRANSMISSION TERP V WILL EDIT FL-2, FL-4 AND FL-5 TO REFLECT THE IMMEDIATE PRECEDENCE. BONN AND FRANKFURT WILL RECEIVE THE MESSAGE WITHOUT THE UPPERCASE J'S AND BLANK SPACE FOR THE S'S.  
3. PARIS, THE FLASH ADDRESSEE, WILL HAVE TO SEND AN RZ TO BELTSVILLE AND A ZDF TO STATE. HOSKINS  
BT  
#9214

NNNN{{{{{{{{{{{{{{{{{{

**5 FAH-2 H-423 Exhibit H-423.2 (3)**  
**FLASH TRANSMISSION TELEGRAM AND**  
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*(TL:TEL-3; 12-13-2002)*  
*(Uniform all agencies)*

VZCZCPR1209  
00 RUEHZZ  
DE RUEHFR #0038 3181131  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
BT  
UNCLAS SVC RZ ABC123 IMI ABC123  
BT  
#0038  
(EOM)

ZDF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
VZCZCPR1210  
00 RUEHMPI  
DE RUEHFR #0039 3181132  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
BT  
UNCLAS SVC PARIS ZDF SECSTATE 109214 ZUB 131131Z NOV 00  
BT  
#0039  
(EOM)