



Briefing Sheet: **Communication Team**

Sept 4, 1996: Mission Directives

The Mission

Barring any new developments on Montserrat, at the beginning of the e-Mission, the Space Shuttle's crew will repair the Low Earth Orbiting Satellite. If the repairs are successful, you will begin to receive important data that will update your Emergency Response Teams on the situation both on Montserrat and within 500 miles of the island.

You will prepare reports on the status of all potential dangers to the island.

Good luck,
Mission Control

Team Tasks

Appoint people to the following tasks:

- Comm. Officer. Select one spokesperson who uses the microphone and the video feed for communication with Challenger's Mission Control.
- Data Officer. Select one person to type all team reports and other messages into a chat/data window. The person selected should be able to type without looking at the keys. The data officer's task is critically important because technical difficulties during major weather disturbances can disrupt communication.

Your Task

- You must make sure there is a steady flow of information from each team to Mission Control, and from Mission Control back to each team.
- Reports (written and oral) should be relayed every 5 - 6 minutes. If there is a period of time where a report has not been relayed, it is your responsibility to prompt your teammates for this information to send.

Mission Preparation

- Become familiar with the communication system between you and Mission Control and the verbal protocols you will use to talk with Mission Control.
- Establish a communications flow chart that permits all teams to communicate effectively with each other. Steps in flow chart:
 - Mission Control sends message.
 - Communications Team distributes to appropriate team.
 - Teams process data and report findings to Evacuation Team and Comm Team.
 - Communications Team reads and types reports to Mission Control.
- Create a simple, three-colored, paper reporting system that will allow you to identify the information at each stage of the communications flow. Assign one additional message color that should be used only if a situation is considered extremely dangerous.
- Meet with team spokespersons and discuss the communications protocols and how the information will be communicated between the teams. Discuss how important it is that all numbers and data be accompanied by clear and consistent labels. Inform teams of color-code system.

Communications Officer Protocol

It is important to relay the information in an appropriate manner. All communication sent to Mission Control should include the proper **protocol**:

- Mission Control should be addressed as "Mission Control" or "Commander (Name)"
- Every message that is sent to Mission Control should end with "Over"

Example: "Mission Control, this is Operation Survivor. I have a message from the Hurricane Team. The message is... wind speeds are 30 miles per hour. Over"

- All messages coming from Mission Control should be acknowledged with “We copy that” or “We read you” and then “Over.” This is important protocol so that we know on both ends that messages have been received.

Data Officer Protocol

It is important to relay the information in an appropriate manner. All communication sent to Mission Control should include the proper **protocol**:

- It is the job of the data officer to send all communication through chat/data window, once it has been relayed through microphone.
- Every message sent through chat to Mission Control, should end with “over”.
- All messages from Mission Control should be acknowledged with “we copy that or “we read you”. This is important protocol so that we know on both ends that messages have been received.

Other commonly used messages

- We received the last message and understand
“Copy that”
“Roger”
“We read you”
- You are pausing to receive a message (While waiting, there should be no extra communication)
“Ready to receive”
“Standing by”

Technical Tips

- All communication should be spoken first over the microphone and then typed into the chat window.
- At times it is necessary to be closer to, or further from, the microphone so the communication is clear.
- Depending on the quality of the connection, you may need to speak more slowly, or more clearly so communication is optimized.

You can access the Communications Center through the link available in the Mission section of the website.