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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / ~~B.P. No.~~	2438	~~Press~~ / Mis.

Dated 19.11.1828 ~~196~~ .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

2436
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Telegraph Messages.

No. 30. Read the following letter from W. F. MELHUISH, Esq., Assistant Superintendent in charge Madras Government Telegraph Office, to the Hon. D. F. CARMICHAEL, Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 9th November 1875, No. 391:—

I have the honor to send you a copy of the Revised Rules regarding the treatment of Confidential and Precedence Messages, and to request the favor of your writing the words "*Clear line and Offices*" on messages in future instead of the word "*Confidential*" only.

2. Your telegram just received here for Dr. Fayrer and marked "*Confidential*" "*Emergent*," has been transmitted under the "*Clear line and Office*" Rules.

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13. "Clear Line" and "Precedence" or "Express" (X.) Messages.

"*Clear the line*," definition of.

1. The phrase "*Clear the line*" means that from the moment of the signal being received all work in hand on the line required to be "cleared" is to be *entirely suspended*, and messages in whatever stage of transmission are to be put aside until the message for which the line has been cleared has passed through.

"*Clear line and Offices*," &c.

2. The officials empowered to clear the *line* have also the power to "Clear line *and Offices*." Messages for which *offices* are cleared are to be considered as "*Confidential*."

"*Clear line and Offices*," treatment of messages so marked.

3. When a cover marked *Confidential*, "*Clear line telegram*, &c." is brought to office, it must be taken at once *unopened* to the Telegraph Master *in charge* if he is on the premises; if not, to the Telegraph Master on duty, or Senior Signaller if there is no 2nd Telegraph Master. The Telegraph Master or Senior Signaller will then himself open the cover, and if it prove to contain a message marked "Clear line *and Offices*" from an officer empowered to clear the line, he will *himself* bill for the message, and fill in the particulars in the *Sent Message Register*. He will then call the Telegraph Master of the Station to which the message is to be signalled and also the Telegraph Masters of any intermediate stations that may be working in T, and inform them that he has a C. L. C. O. ("Clear line and Offices") message. All Telegraph Masters concerned will then clear their offices of Signallers, and the Telegraph Masters of the two terminal offices will themselves respectively send and receive the message, care being taken so to adjust the transmitting keys and sounders that there may be no possibility of any one in an adjoining room or outside reading off the message by ear. Telegraph Masters of intermediate offices in T will remain in the signal rooms of their offices until the transmission of the message is completed. If the message has again to be transmitted, the Telegraph Master of the station to which it was signalled will call the Telegraph Master of the next station, and so on, as above directed, until the message reaches its destination. The Telegraph Master of the station of delivery will himself place it in a cover marked *Confidential*, address and seal it. This cover he will then place in a *large* envelope addressed as usual, but not marked "Confidential."

4. "*Clear line*" or "*Clear line and Offices*" messages will have those words written *and signalled in full* as the first words of the text of the message and also *in Code* in *official Instructions*. These words in the body of the message are charged for, but are signalled in *Official Instructions* free. The "*Clear-line*" signal will also be given before the commencement of the message, and any Signaller receiving it is at once to inform his Telegraph Master, who will see that all other stations are ready, and will be held responsible that no avoidable delay occurs in pushing the message through.

5. In ordinary times the sending of a message under the "*Clear-line*" signal will be a matter of extreme rarity; it is all the more important, therefore, that when the signal *is* given

the strictest attention should be paid to it, as it will only be given in case of the *utmost importance*.

Line not to be "cleared" on insufficient authority.

6. Telegraph Masters will be held responsible that the line is not "cleared" upon the authority of any person other than one of those enumerated in Inland Rule 46, and in the event of any message being improperly and unauthorizedly marked "*Clear the line*," the unauthorized phrase must be struck out and the sender informed thereof.

7. The *original*, *transit*, and *received* copies of "C. L. C. O." Messages (not in cipher) are to be kept by the Telegraph Master under lock and key for three clear days, and then despatched to the Check Office as explained in Chapter IV. under the head of Message Drafts.*

* See p. 239.

"*Precedence*" when accorded.

8. Under the operation of Inland Rule 17, *any* public officer may claim *precedence* for a State message "in cases of pressing public emergency and importance."

9. *Precedence* is also accorded to *all* Foreign messages, to N F messages (except some Ceylon local ones), to departmental *Calls for Repetition* and their *Replies*, and to Reuter's messages addressed to "*Government and Press*."

"*Precedence*" or "*Express*," definition of.

10. The term "*Precedence*" or "*Express*" implies that the message is to take precedence of all unsent messages, but is not to interfere with the transmission of a message already begun. A Signaller on receiving such a message will place it on the top of the file of messages before them, instead of at the bottom, as would be the case were the message intended for transmission in ordinary course.

11. X F S messages take precedence of X F T or X F P. On receipt into an office they are to be marked with a large X in *red* ink or pencil.

"*Clear-line*" and "*Precedence*" messages, how indicated.

12. When the word "*Precedence*" is written by the sender of an X message at the commencement or end of the text of the message it is not to be signalled; the use of the word by the sender is to be considered merely as his desire to mark the character of his message, which the Departmental *Code* signals otherwise sufficiently accomplish.

Messages marked "*Confidential*" by officials not authorized to "Clear the line."

13. If a message from an official not authorized to clear the line is tendered for transmission marked "Confidential," the word is to be considered merely as a *direction to the Addressee*, and will be charged for as the first word of the message. It is not to be given in "*Official Instructions*," and the message is on no account to be treated as described in paragraph 3.

Private message marked confidential.

14. Should a private message commence with the word "Precedence," the word must be signalled as part of the message, but on no account whatever is it to be treated as an X message.

No. 31. ORDER THEREON, 10th November 1875, No. 1341.

Copy of the Revised Rules will be furnished to all Departments of the Secretariat for information and guidance.

(True Extract.)

Officiating Chief Secretary.

To the Revenue Department.
" Military do.
" Public Works do.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

Revenue Department

№ 4472

Govt. of {1875} Madras.

PUBLIC.

To

THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated November, 10th.

Issued —— 18

Recd. —— 19 Encl.

G.O., 10th November 1875, No. 1341.

NOVEMBER.
Nos. 30-31.

Telegraph Messages.—Copy of the Revised Rules regarding the treatment of Confidential and Precedence Messages, furnished to all Departments of the Secretariat.

№ 2438

Recorded

19 Nov /75