

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

No 88.

Colonial Treasury, 1st June, 1875.

THE following Rules and Regulations for the guidance of the Officers of the Electric Telegraph Department, Tasmania, have been approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council.

By His Excellency's Command,

FRED^x. M. INNES.**OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF STATIONS RESPONSIBLE.**

1. OFFICERS having charge of telegraph stations in Tasmania will be held responsible for the efficient performance of the several duties of their appointment, in conformity with the following Rules and Regulations; and are required to make themselves acquainted with the provisions of the Telegraph Act, a copy of which is appended hereto.

OFFICE HOURS.

2. Every office must be ready for the transaction of business daily (Sunday, Christmas Day, and Good Friday excepted) at 8:30 A.M. In cases where the communication may be required to be kept available after usual office hours, or on Sunday, Christmas Day, or Good Friday, special instructions will be forwarded from the Superintendent of Telegraphs. On Sundays the offices will be open for one hour (from 8:30 to 9:30) morning and evening.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

3. The adjustment of receipt checks will commence at 8:30 A.M., and afterwards the ordinary business of the line, unless in cases of very important messages admitting of no delay. Such may be transmitted out of the usual order, but only as exceptional cases.

After the settlement of receipts, Hobart office will "take circuit" and exchange business with every office for which messages may have been deposited; circuit will then be passed to other stations. Errors in check having been notified, immediate attention must be given to their adjustment by the manager or officer in charge.

LIMIT OF CIRCUIT.

4. No two offices shall keep the circuit between each other for more than *fifteen minutes* at any one time, nor shall any office hold circuit for a longer period, unless in case of defective working in the line, adjustment of receipts, important despatches on Government service, or in transmitting reports for the press. In the latter case *half-an-hour* will be the limit.

RULE FOR CALLING.

5. In "calling" or signalling between offices, the course adopted will be to give the "call" three times, then the "sign" or "call signal" of the office signalling. On repeating this three distinct times, making in all nine "calls," and receiving no affirmative in return, it will be understood that the office signalled is not in attendance, and the circuit may be passed to another station immediately; or, in the case of a general "call," the station neglecting to answer may be passed by. Offices neglecting to answer the "signal call" must subsequently furnish an explanation to the signalling office as to the cause of the irregularity.

RESPONSIBILITY OF OPERATORS.

6. Each operator, while engaged at an instrument in transmitting or receiving, will be held responsible for the correctness of the messages passing through his hands. All

operators are specially cautioned against reading off messages to a copyist; but each operator, while in the act of receiving messages, must transcribe the contents from the register-paper to the message-form in his own handwriting. Care must be taken to furnish full address of addressee and sender in each message.

MANIPULATION.

7. The manipulation must be *rapid, distinct, accurate, and intelligible*; this being essential, and especially so in forwarding public intelligence or voluminous reports.

CONTENTION FOR CIRCUIT.

8. Any officer finding it necessary to claim privilege under rule 4, may do so at the conclusion of a message, or a paragraph in "report," by using the signal 8. *No contention for circuit will be tolerated under any circumstances.* Any officer finding circuit broken or interrupted will permit the office interrupting to explain the cause, and, if in order, allow the latter privilege of transmission, if required; after which the former may proceed with the completion of the business in hand.

Operators are strictly cautioned not to "break in" or interrupt for frivolous or insufficient reasons.

INSTRUMENTS TO BE KEPT IN PROPER ADJUSTMENT.

9. *Relay magnets*, or receiving magnets, must be kept constantly in true adjustment, more especially during the prevalence of rainy or foggy weather, imperfections in the insulation, the presence of atmospheric electricity, or other disturbing causes. Officers in charge of intermediate stations are required to observe this instruction particularly; and they are to be careful not to allow the lever-spring of the relay or register to become lowered or slackened more than will actually admit of writing being recorded.

Great care must be observed to keep the registering instruments in such perfect adjustment at all times that a clear and legible copy of each message transmitted may be retained on a strip of paper provided for that purpose. No excuse will be accepted for any neglect of this rule, nor are telegrams to be received by *sound* alone, under any circumstances.

The answering signal or acknowledgment for all telegrams transmitted, is invariably to be recorded on the register-paper of the transmitting office.

REGISTER-PAPER TO BE DATED AND TIMED.

10. The register-paper is to be dated and timed regularly every morning before commencing business, and also during the day should the paper require to be changed.

In using the wide register-paper, the lines printed or embossed shall not exceed eight in number, having spaces of not less than one-eighth of an inch between each line and the succeeding line; and that, in the case of the narrow register-paper, the number of lines shall not exceed three, having similar, or greater, spaces between two lines. In requisitioning for register paper, the required width, to suit the instrument, should be always stated.

ABBREVIATIONS.

11. The code of abbreviations (with which each office will be supplied on a separate sheet) and figure signals (page 13) are intended to be generally used, particularly in transmitting reports for the press; and operators are requested to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with all the abbreviations in a practical manner, so as to afford every facility for rapid communications. Ordinary messages must, however, be written in full, and all numbers therein transmitted in words as well as figures; thus, "Seventeen (17) pounds six (6) shillings and six (6) pence." *Special attention is drawn to this rule.*

PROMPTNESS AND CELERTY TO BE OBSERVED.

12. In the receipt, transmission, and delivery of messages, and in all matters relating to the business of the department, the utmost promptness, accuracy, and despatch must be observed by the officers concerned.

COURTESY ON LINES ENJOINED.

13. Officers must be careful to observe proper decorum toward each other in conducting the working of the lines; impropriety of language or the exhibition of acerbity of disposition will not be permitted on any account. Conversation between the stations, except on the business of the department, is strictly prohibited.

OFFICERS AT INTERMEDIATE STATIONS REQUIRED TO ASSIST.

14. In the event of defective working of the line, preventing stations at great distance apart from working as usual, officers at intermediate stations are *expected* to render every assistance in their power to the stations on either side, by repeating the business, or assisting to break for the receiving station, and otherwise, as may be required.

OPERATORS MAY "BREAK IN" FOR PURPOSE OF KEEPING STATIONS THEY MAY REQUIRE UNTIL LINE UNOCCUPIED.

15. At stations where business may remain untransmitted until near 8 P.M., operators may "break in" at the end of any message (should another office be in possession of the circuit), and by using the words "Rule 15" claim the privilege of calling the offices required, and request them to remain in attendance until the line may be unoccupied, after which circuit will be returned to the offices previously engaged.

TESTING IN CASES OF INTERRUPTION.

16. If circuit be interrupted for more than five minutes, the officer in charge will at once ascertain locality of interruption, and report to stations on the other side of his office, if any, and carefully examine and test his office connections. If it is a repairing station, the line repairer, contractor, or other person must be directed immediately to prepare for starting; the order to start being given within a reasonable time from the losing of circuit. To avoid the possibility of delay in restoring communication, precedence must in all cases be given to numeral signals 35 and 36. Operators must, however, be careful not to send repairers on useless journeys, but thoroughly satisfy themselves in first instance that the defect does not exist in their own offices.—(Vide Rule 18).

INSTRUMENTS AND BATTERIES TO BE KEPT IN GOOD ORDER.

17. Every portion of the instruments must be kept clean and serviceable; wheels, pinions, bearings, levers, &c., to be carefully freed from dust; any material defect in, or damage to, the instruments to be immediately notified to the Superintendent of Telegraphs.

The main and local batteries must always be kept thoroughly clean and in good working order. Care must be observed that a sufficient supply of all requisites be kept available to last until additional supplies may be received.

OFFICE WIRES, LIGHTNING ARRESTERS, AND CONNECTIONS TO BE EXAMINED.

18. In case of any interruption on the lines, before a line repairer is despatched to effect repairs, the manager or officer in charge of the station must first make a special examination of all the wires, batteries, instruments, metallic contacts, &c. within his office, and thoroughly test the same for insulation and continuity, or for a fault of any description. Neglect of this precaution will render him liable for the amount of the lineman's expenses in the event of the fault subsequently appearing to have been within the precincts of the station.

Lightning arresters must be *frequently* examined. The discharge points should be kept evenly adjusted; the space between the earthplate to be no wider than will allow of a piece of thin writing paper being passed freely through the points.

All office connections to be kept bright and clean, and all joints in wire to be well soldered and carried quite free from walls.

EARTH WIRES.

19. Earth wires (unless at terminal stations) must not be used *under any circumstances whatever*, except to ascertain the locality of an interruption, or by special direction from the chief office.

LINES, INSTRUMENTS, ETC.—NO ALTERATION TO BE MADE.

20. Officers must not in *any way* alter the arrangements of the lines, instruments, wires, fittings, or fixtures at their respective stations, without special permission or instructions first received from the Superintendent of Telegraphs; or, in cases of urgent necessity, from the chief office.

REPORTS OF INTERRUPTIONS.

21. Reports of interruption to any portion of the communication are to be forwarded by telegraph, as concisely as possible, to the chief office, by officers in charge of stations adjacent to the break. Detailed reports with reference to the cause of interruption, or delay in effecting repairs, conveying full information on the subject generally, are to be conveyed by post to the Superintendent of Telegraphs.

EXTENT OF SECTIONS.

22. Officers appointed to stations where a line repairer or contractor is employed must, immediately on taking charge, ascertain the condition and extent of the sections of line apportioned to the office.

PROCEEDINGS IN CASE OF DAMAGE TO LINE.

23. In cases where an interruption may have been occasioned through carelessness or wilful negligence on the part of any one, it will be the duty of the officer in charge of the section immediately to notify the police, with a view to proceedings under the 10th clause of the Telegraph Act, reporting particulars forthwith to the Superintendent of Telegraphs. If the officer in charge of the station report that he considers the damage to have been accidentally caused, and the person concerned shall offer to pay the expenses incurred, payment may be accepted with the sanction of the Superintendent of Telegraphs.

MESSAGES FOR TRANSMISSION.

24. On receiving a message at the counter, or receiving window, care must be taken to see that it is plainly and legibly written, on the usual form. The particulars of the address must be full and detailed (giving street and number, if possible). Figures (if any) must be written out in words, and the document must bear a proper signature.

MESSAGES TO BE COUNTED AND INITIALED BY RECEIVER.

25. The proper fee must be charged according to the scale approved by the Governor in Council, except on messages sent on Public Service only. The words contained in all messages must be carefully counted; and the number and amount of check, the time of reception, and the initial of the receiver must be duly recorded.

WORDS—HOW COUNTED.

26. All abbreviated or connected words, such as *don't, won't, you'll, &c.*, must be counted as two or more words, as they would be if they were written in full.

UNPAID MESSAGES.

27. Unpaid-for messages must not be accepted, except under Rule 29, unless such messages may be replies to interrogative telegrams marked "33."

SECURITY FOR PAYMENT, AND CANCELLATION OF MESSAGES.

28. Unpaid-for messages, offered by responsible persons who will guarantee the payment of charges for the transmission and delivery of such messages on their being

received at their destination, may be accepted; but, in case of doubt, a deposit as security for the full amount of charges must be obtained from the sender, which deposit must be refunded when the receiving officer reports that the charges have been collected on delivery. When from any cause it is necessary to cancel a message after transmission (in accordance with Clause 8 of Scale of Charges, &c.), the officers will give the necessary directions, and furnish to the Superintendent of Telegraphs, with monthly return, a statement of messages so cancelled.

OFFICE MESSAGES.

29. An office message, requesting an answer, should never be sent unless the person making the request guarantee payment of charges.

ASKING FOR ANSWERS.

30. When asking for an answer to a message, a memo. in a concise form must be sent (for example) as follows:—"From Melbourne to J. Smith, 110 Liverpool street, Hobart Town; answer requested to telegram of yesterday, from W. Brown. (Signed) Hobart office." Such message to be copied without abbreviation on the usual form.

MESSAGES IMPERFECTLY ADDRESSED.

31. When a person to whom a message is addressed cannot be found, a telegram must be transmitted immediately to the sender, as follows (for example):—"From Hobart to W. Brown, 250 Bourke street west, Melbourne. J. Smith not known at 110 Liverpool street; send better address. (Signed) Hobart office."

PORTIONS OF MESSAGE TO BE REPEATED.

32. If any part of a message be of special importance, or liable to be misunderstood, the word or sentence must be repeated immediately after giving the check,—the repetition to be given distinctly and shortly, with proper pauses between words or initial letters.

MESSAGES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE OR CIPHER.

33. In sending messages in foreign languages, the writing must be given slowly, with a distinct space between each word or initial letter; the same precaution must also be strictly observed in transmitting cipher messages, which must, in all cases, be repeated back to the sending station.

TRANSFERRED MESSAGES.

34. When a message is intended to be transferred from one circuit to another, the signal call of the station to which it is addressed must be given before commencing the message, and the name of the station must be transmitted at length after the address, instead of the ordinary signal letter.

TIMING MESSAGES.

35. The exact time at which each telegram is sent or received, is to be noted thereon by the operator through whom it may have been sent or received, together with the initial letter of such operator in his own handwriting.

MESSAGES O.P.S.O.

36. All telegrams described as "On Public Service only," by officers authorised to send such messages, are to be transmitted and delivered as addressed, free of charge; but should an operator have reasonable doubt whether any message so forwarded is on Public Service, he will, after transmission or delivery, forward a copy, by post, to the Superintendent of Telegraphs to be dealt with.

SECRECY.

37. A telegram must be considered as *strictly confidential*, and as much the special property of the sender and receiver as if the communication had passed in the form of a sealed letter through the post office. Any officer divulging the contents of a telegram, or

making use of information improperly obtained through such a source, will render himself liable to the penalties provided by section 11 of the Electric Telegraph Act; and any person who shall make any message the subject of office gossip, or who shall in any way communicate to any other person whatsoever (otherwise than in the course of duty) the contents of any such message, will be liable to be dismissed the Public Service.

DEFINITION OF PRESS AND CIPHER MESSAGES.

38. Messages for publication not being private advertisements, and messages sent from one newspaper proprietor or news agent to another respecting information for publication, must be treated as press messages.

When a message otherwise ordinary contains a fictitious word, or word having no recognised existence in any language, such message must be charged cipher rate.

BOOKS TO BE KEPT NEATLY WRITTEN UP.

39. All the record books and writings connected with each office must be kept in a neat and creditable manner, properly written up, and a daily entry made as to working of lines.

MONTHLY OR OTHER RETURNS.

40. Managers, or operators having the charge of offices, are requested to observe strict punctuality in forwarding their monthly returns, abstracts of salary, expenses, &c., to the Chief Officer, and to keep a careful and exact account, in the authorised form, of the receipt and consumption of all stores, &c., supplied to them half-yearly or otherwise, as may be required under the general regulations of Government, and the Rules and Regulations of the Department.

The financial year terminates on the 31st December, and all outstanding claims and accounts for the service of each financial year should, to prevent delay in settlement, be sent to the Chief Office not later than the 16th December, or earlier if so advised.

BLANK FORMS.

41. Managers and operators in charge of offices are not to allow blank "receiving forms" or "telegram envelopes" to be removed from or taken out of the office *under any pretence whatever*. The only blank forms to be issued from the office for use by the public are the ordinary "transmission forms" in sheets or books.

ENTRY OF MESSAGES.

42. Each day the transmitted telegrams are to be properly entered in the Message Book, folded, and numbered on the outside with number corresponding to that in the book; these should be made into daily and monthly packets, neatly done up and docketed, so as to facilitate reference. Messages received must also be entered at once into the Message Book direct.

MESSAGES NEATLY WRITTEN.

43. All telegrams must be written in a neat, plain hand. Managers of stations, or other officers, are to be particularly careful to see that the telegrams issued from their respective offices are in every way correctly and creditably written out previous to despatch for delivery. The operator receiving a telegram is to count the words previous to its being entered.

STANDARD TIME.

44. A time signal for comparison or correction of mean time is passed over the lines at 1 P.M. daily. Managers of stations, or operators in charge of offices, must be careful to obtain the signal when transmitted, and failing to do so from any cause, they are to obtain the *exact correction* from the chief office at some subsequent period during the day. At not less than 3 minutes of 1 o'clock P.M., standard time, all stations must cease working until after the 1 P.M. signal has been given.

SIGNAL "WAIT."

45. Great care must be exercised in making use of the abbreviation signal "1" or "Wait," not to allow the key to remain "open" on that or any other ground, for at farthest a longer period than *half a minute*.