

### 36 Vital Intelligence Sightings – MERINT Reporting Procedures

- 1 In order to extend the early warning coverage for the defence of the North American continent a plan is now in existence for the reporting of vital intelligence sightings during peacetime. Reports originating from ships will be known as MERINT (pronounced *MUR-ENT*) messages.
- 2 All Canadian vessels should originate MERINT reports as and when applicable. Types of reports shall be as follows:
  - (a) MERINT report - initial sighting.
  - (b) AMPLIFYING report - a report giving additional significant information that becomes available.
  - (c) CANCELLATION report - a report cancelling an initial sighting or amplifying report.
- 3 MERINT reports should be made under the following circumstances:
  - (a) Immediately upon a vital intelligence sighting, except when the vessel is within territorial waters of a country other than Canada, the U.S.A. or Greenland.
  - (b) When a situation previously reported changes sufficiently to warrant an amplifying report.
  - (c) When subsequent observation nullifies an initial sighting or amplifying report so as to warrant a cancellation report.

**Note:** In the event a report cannot be made by radio, the master should report the details of the MERINT sighting to the appropriate Canadian or U.S. consular or military authority immediately upon arrival in port. Such reports should be made by the quickest available means.
- 4 MERINT messages should be transmitted to the nearest or most convenient Canadian or U.S. Government coast station. No address is necessary for such messages as coast stations hold detailed instructions for the delivery of MERINT messages.
- 5 All airborne and waterborne objects which appear to be hostile, suspicious or unidentified should be reported.
  - (a) The following are examples:
    - (i) Guided missiles.
    - (ii) Unidentified flying objects.
    - (iii) Submarines.
    - (iv) Surface warship positively identified as not Canadian or U.S.
    - (v) Aircraft or contrails (vapour trails made by high flying aircraft) which appear to be directed against Canada, the U.S., their territories or possessions.
  - (b) Reports should not be made on the following objects:
    - (i) Surface craft or aircraft in normal passage.
    - (ii) Known Canadian or U.S. military ships and submarines.
    - (iii) Known Canadian or U.S. Government ships.
    - (iv) Known Canadian or U.S. military aircraft.

- 6** MERINT reports shall contain the following data, as applicable, in the order listed:
- (a) The word MERINT as the first word of the message.
  - (b) The name and call sign of the reporting ship.
  - (c) The object sighted. A brief description containing the following items should be given.
    - (i) Number of aircraft, vessels, missiles, etc.
    - (ii) Category of object, general description, etc. i.e. size, shape, type of propulsion, etc.
  - (d) Reporting ship's position at time of sighting.
  - (e) Date and time of sighting in G.M.T.
  - (f) Altitude of object (if applicable) expressed as low, medium or high.
  - (g) Direction of travel of object.
  - (h) Estimated speed of object.
  - (i) Any observed identification, insignia or other significant information.

**Note:** MERINT reports should not be withheld or delayed due to lack of data for any of the above items.

- 7** When calling a coast station to deliver a MERINT message the call should be preceded by the word *MERINT* transmitted three times as a priority indicator. If this priority indicator does not produce satisfactory precedence the International Urgency Signal may be used.

Example:

*MERINT MERINT MERINT - HALIFAX COAST GUARD RADIO HALIFAX RADIO HALIFAX COAST GUARD RADIO - THIS IS KINGFISH KINGFISH KINGFISH - OVER.*

- 8** The following are examples of MERINT messages:

- (a) INITIAL report.  
*MERINT PACIFIC LOGGER VICTOR GOLF ROMEO XRAY SIX JET BOMBERS FIVE ONE NORTH ONE THREE FIVE WEST ONE FOUR ONE FIVE ZERO TWO ZULU HEADED SOUTHEAST HIGH WITH CONTRAILS SPEED ABOUT FIVE ZERO ZERO MILES PER HOUR NO IDENTIFICATION BROKEN CLOUDS - OVER.*
- (b) AMPLIFYING report.  
*MERINT AMPLIFY PACIFIC LOGGER VICTOR GOLF ROMEO XRAY ONE FOUR ONE FIVE ZERO TWO ZULU TWO ADDITIONAL JET BOMBERS SIGHTED CIRCLING TO SOUTH - WEST ONE FOUR ONE FIVE ZERO EIGHT ZULU - OVER.*
- (c) CANCELLATION report.  
*MERINT CANCEL PACIFIC LOGGER VICTOR GOLF ROMEO XRAY ONE FOUR ONE FIVE ZERO TWO ZULU IDENTIFIED AS UNITED STATES AIRCRAFT - OVER.*

Authority: Department of National Defence (NDHQ)