

I. MILITARY CORRESPONDENCE

A. Introduction

The AFP, like any military establishment throughout the world, transacts most of its business through correspondence which thereafter becomes the written record of all its transactions. However, this formal method of communication is not the only means at its disposal to get things done. Its transactions may also be facilitated, whenever practicable, by the maximum use of personal contact and the telephone.

Through military correspondence, even the smallest tactical unit in the AFP chain of command and assigned in a far flung area can communicate with its immediate or higher headquarters. Thus, military correspondence is to get the action, or as means to influence decisions.

Military correspondence is concerned with almost any subject and takes many forms. However, the usual forms within the broad meaning of military correspondence are the military or subjects to letters, non-military letters, endorsements, disposition form, personnel action form, routing slip, and messages, all of which shall be discussed in this chapter. The purpose, style, preparation, and contents of each form shall be discussed.

B. Definition of Terms

1. Military (subject-to) letter is used as a means of communication among military, naval and air personnel and between activities of the AFP.
2. Naval Letter (from-to-subjects) is used by Navy personnel when communicating with offices within the Philippine Navy and with foreign naval establishments. When Marines and other navy personnel intends to send a communication outside of the Philippine Navy, he uses the format of the Military Letter.
3. Endorsement is a reply of forwarding statement added to a military letter.
4. Disposition Form is an informal communication used between staff agencies within a command's headquarters. It has varied purposes.
5. Personnel Action Form is intended for use to initiate personnel actions/request.
6. Routing Slip is an informal type of communication used to transmit official papers from one office to another within headquarters.
7. Radio Message is an informal communication sent through wire services to facilitate action on a certain matter.

C. Characteristics of Military Correspondence:

1. Simplicity – use simple and plain words. The words are exact, simple and well chosen.
2. Clarity – present ideas that are crystal clear, limit each sentence to one main thought.
3. Conciseness – only essential information is included. Ideas are expressed in the fewest words consistent with clearness, completeness and courtesy. Do not make a paragraph when you can say it in sentence.
4. Coherence – treat first things first. To place your ideas in an orderly sequence, isolate the essentials then arrange and proportion them logically and harmoniously.

5. Emphasis – achieve emphasis by careful and thoughtful arrangement of words (ideas be treated in the order of their importance and that the most important may be stored).

6. Completeness – each piece of correspondence should be nearly self-explanatory as possible. All necessary information is included. When it is necessary to refer to other sources summarize briefly the information contained in those references. All questions shall be satisfactorily answered.

II. MILITARY (SUBJECT-TO) LETTER

A. Style

A military (subject-to) letter follows a fundamental style, varying only in details. The letter should be phrased in a courteous way and the language should be refined without vulgarity. It is typed in two (2) carbon copies (or three print outs) using a 8x10 1/2 bond paper.

B. Major Components

The military letter has three (3) major components - heading, body, and close.

1. Heading - this part consists of all the materials above the first line of the body. It contains the office of origin and address, file reference, identifying initials, date, subject, channels through which the letter will be sent. The placement of these parts is as shown in Fig. 11-1.

2. Body - the body of the military letter is that part that is placed between the heading and the close. It is substance of the letter as distinguished from the formal beginning and ending. In preparing this portion of the letter, be guided by the following rules:

a) Spacing - the body will be single spaced, except when it is less than nine (9) lines and no reply is anticipated. In this case, it will be double spaced. Double space is authorized between paragraphs. The first line of this portion begins on the fifth line below the initial address.

b) Paragraphing - when a letter consists of only one paragraph, the paragraph will not be numbered although its sub-paragraphs, they will be numbered consecutively. The first line of a paragraph is indented five (5) spaces. The succeeding line begins at the left margin. When a paragraph is subdivided, there must be at least two (2) of the same subdivisions.

c) Abbreviations - authorized abbreviations may be used in the body of a military letter. But they must be used sparingly. Abbreviations are normally written without spacing or periods.

d) References - references to a publication must be specific and will be fully identified. When referring to a correspondence, include the type, file reference, office of origin, date, and subject.

e) Page Numbering - the first page is not numbered. However, the succeeding pages will be numbered consecutively, except for the last page. Page numbers are centered one (1) inch from the bottom of the page.

f) Continuations - a paragraph of three (3) or more lines will not be divided between pages. At least two (2) lines of a divided paragraph will appear on each page. IN dividing a sentence between pages, at least two (2) words will appear on each page.

3. Close - The close of a military letter consists of the command or authority line, signature element and enclosure block.

a) Command or authority line - when a military letter is signed for a commander or head of a command, agency, or office by an individual authorized to do so, and authority line is shown. The authority line indicates that it is an expression of a will of the command, agency or office personally signs the letter or when the body contains a mandatory phrase such as "The Commanding General desires..." The command or authority line begins on the second line below the last paragraph directly under the first letter of the first word of the preceding main paragraph. It is typed in capital letters and without any use of abbreviations. It ends with a colon.

b) Signature element - this portion is typewritten five (5) lines below the command or authority line and indented one (1) space to the right from the center of the page. It contains the first name, middle initial and surname of the officer authorized to sign, followed below his rank and branch of service, and his official designation on the last line. These should be typewritten in block style.

c) Enclosure block - this space is found on the left side of the page and in line with the typed signature of the signature

d) Block. It contains a listing of all enclosures which are supplementary documents that are sent with communication to provide additional information.

III. ENDORSEMENT

A. Style

The style of an endorsement is generally the same as that of a military (subject-to) letter. It has the same components as the military and non-military letters. There is one major difference between a military letter and an endorsement. In an endorsement, the date is written at the end of the office of origin and address. The date in a military letter is written as a single unit and located on the second line below the address of the issuing headquarters or office. Endorsements are numbered consecutively.

There are two (2) types of endorsements used in the military other than the formal form normally practiced. These are the stamp and checked or initial endorsements. Their uses and style are explained hereunder.

In cases not disciplinary in nature, the use of a stamp endorsement is authorized. It has the same elements as the military letter. The abbreviation "Ind" is preceded by a blank space for the endorsement number. Expressions forming the body of the endorsement include the following:

Approved:	Disapproved
Note and return:	Concerned noted
For compliance:	No record
For appropriate action and return	

A checked or initial endorsement is used to forward a communication without comment. It is also numbered in sequence. "Forwarded" and "Returned" are not used.

MILITARY LETTER

PHILIPPINE NAVY
 HEADQUARTERS NAVAL RESERVE COMMAND
 Cabildo St., Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila

)
)2 spaces

04 April 2001

O/R1

)
) 2 spaces

SUBJECT: Military Letter

)
) 4 spaces

THRU: Channel

)
) 4 spaces

TO: Chief of Staff, AFP
 Attn: DCS for Education & Training, J7
 Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City
 Quezon City

)
) 2 spaces

1. The military letter is used for correspondence with military, naval and air personnel and between activities of major services and other units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

2. Margin 1 ¼ inches (15 spaces-elite type) on the left side and ¾ inch (9 spaces) on the right side. The margin is kept as straight as possible, when no printed letterhead is available, the top margin of the typed letterhead is approximately ¾ inch (5 spaces) from top of the paper.

3. Only one side of a sheet of paper is used. The file reference is typed in the upper left corner as shown one this sample, and the list of enclosure is typed on the lower left corner, beginning on the same line on which the typed signature appears.

4. Single spacing with double spacing between paragraphs is the standard practice. If the letter is less than nine line and neither reply nor further action is anticipated, it may be double spaced.

FOR THE COMMODORE:

ERWIN C CALIMAG
 LT PN
 AC of S for Personnel, R1

NAVAL LETTER

PHILIPPINE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS NAVAL RESERVE COMMAND
Cabildo St., Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila

CPT:RMO:cfr-6311
ONA
Serr:
01 Oct 2002

)
)
)
) 4 spaces

From: Commander, Naval Reserve Command
To: Superintendent, Naval School Center
Via: Commander, Naval Education & Training Command

)
) 2 spaces

Subj: Naval Letter

)
) 2 spaces

Ref: Yeoman Handbook

)
) 2 spaces

Encl: Sample Letter

)
) 2 spaces

1. In a naval letter, the office identifying symbols includes the initial of the officer signing the draft, action clerk, typist and tel number. It shall appear on the right side of the paper in line with the heading address and two inches from the right of the paper.

2. Placement on the "From" line is typed seven spaces below the last of the last line of the letterhead. "To" line is placed immediately below the word "From". The "Via" addresses, each is numbered with an Arabic numeral enclosed in parenthesis. The "Subj" line is typed two spaces below the "To" or "Via" as the case may be. The abbreviated "Subj" is used to introduce a topical statement of the subject of the correspondence. The "Ref" line is two spaces below the last line of the "Subj" and is used when previously prepared material is cited. References are designated in small letters enclosed in parenthesis in chronological order and carefully identifies as to the origin, typed title and date. "Encl" line is two spaces below the "Ref" line, if any they are used to introduce a listing of materials that are to be forwarded with the letter.

3. The text of the letter begins two spaces from the last line of the "Encl", "Ref" or "Subj" line as the case maybe. The letter will be single space with double space between paragraph.

BY COMMAND OF COMMODORE LEGASPI:

)
)
) 5 spaces

)
)
ELPIDIO B CARIÑO
By direction

