

The historic Signals that told the R.A.N. that their War against the Japanese was over, were not seen by many Sailors and very few obtained copies of them as the classic War Souvenir. But then wartime Sailors were used to receiving the minimum information from their Australian Commanding Officers about the task that they were performing for their Country, even in this climactic ending to their war at sea. It was a situation demonstrably unfair, for in many cases the Sailors had fought at sea in defence of Australia for a longer period than a number of these Captains.

However after 45 years I have finally come across a set of these Signals..and from a most unlikely source. The HORSHAM (Corvette) Association produced them. Their Captain had no inhibitions about his Sailors having this souvenir of their War, so the Communication Branch handwrote the Signals for the Ships Company. Certainly this is the first time that I have seen them all. They are worth displaying in full as these original handwritten Signals provide a genuine Naval flavour to that historic occasion. So as space permits they will appear in The BUZZ.

Their text appears as follows, but in typewritten form (with some interpretation)...

The first one was received when Japan started testing the water for Surrender terms. It was sent on 10 August 1945 in "Plain Language" and given "Operational Priority". It was not given a time of despatch but was received at 1314 on 10 August 1945. It originated from Leyte and was addressed to "All Allied Warships". The Signal Message reads.. "THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS JUST ANNOUNCED TO THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT THAT THEY WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE TERMS AT POTSDAM AND INFORMED THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT TO RELAY TO THE UNITED STATES. ONE CONDITION EXISTS THAT THEY BE PERMITTED TO KEEP THEIR EMPORER".

Footnote...The Potsdam Agreement was signed in July 1945 by the Allied Powers and laid down the principles to be used in governing the defeated Enemy Nations.

The reference to Sweden applies because that Country looked after Japanese interests in Countries outside the Japanese wartime sphere of influence. (The Swedish Embassy in Canberra also returned to Japan the ashes of the Sydney Harbour Midget Submarine crews, after their cremation).

The second Signal was sent at 0627 on 15 August 1945. It was a coded message "Confidential, Urgent". Its originator was C.S.W.P.S.F. (Commander South West Pacific Sea Forces) and was addressed to "All Allied Warships". The Signal Message reads..... "JAPAN HAS SURRENDERED CEASE OFFENSIVE ACTION. TAKE ALL WARTIME PRECAUTIONS FOR SELF DEFENSE". The message was received at 0710.

Footnote...The definitive Time of Origin of the Signal was given as 150627Z, which interprets as "15" (August). "0627" (time). "Z" (Greenwich Mean Time).

The third and final Signal was despatched at 1009 on 15 August 1945. It was an "Urgent" Message in "Plain Language" and was re-transmitted by the Naval Officer in Charge Darwin (N.O.I.C. D.) to those ships within his administrative area, on receipt from Admiralty. The Message reads.....

"H.M. GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE JAPANESE HAVE SURRENDERED (2) ALL OFFENSIVE ACTION TO CEASE FORTHWITH. (3) SOME TIME MAY ELAPSE BEFORE THE ACTUAL INSTRUMENT OF SURRENDER IS SIGNED, THEREFORE IT IS CLEAR JAPANESE FORCES HAVE RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS OF THEIR HIGH COMMAND. ACCORDING DANGER OF ATTACK BY INDIVIDUAL U BOAT AND AIRCRAFT MAY EXIST FOR SOME TIME TO COME". This Message was received at 1415 on 15 August 1945.

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For use in
Cypher or
Coding Office
only

(1)..(JAPAN'S FIRST ATTEMPT TO SURRENDER).

Originators Instructions:
(Indication of Priority,
Personal, NOTWT
For Exercise).

Operational
Priority

INTERCEPT GROUP.

TO:

All Allied Warships

From:

Leyte.

The Japanese Government has just announced to the Swedish Government that they were willing to accept the terms at Potsdam and informed the Swedish government to relay to the United States. One condition exists that they be permitted to keep their emperor

U

Book or Table to be used for

Cyphering or Coding.

Recyphering or Recoding.

Initials of
Cypherer or Coder

Time of Receipt in
Cypher or Coding
Office

Date.

P/L

P/L

JHW

1314Z

10/8/45.

NAVAL MESSAGE.

For use in
Cypher or
Coding Office
only

(2).. (THE UNITED STATES' ADVICE AFTER THE JAPANESE SURRENDER).

Originators Instructions:
(Indication of Priority,
Personal, NOTWT
For Exercise).

CONFIDENTIAL.
URGENT.

INTERCEPT GROUP.

TO:

ALL ALLIED WARSHIPS

From:

CSW.PS.F.

JAPAN HAS SURRENDERED CEASE
OFFENSIVE ACTION. TAKE ALL WAR
TIME PRECAUTIONS FOR SELF DEFENSE

150627Z

Book or Table to be used for

Cyphering or Coding.

Recyphering or Recoding.

Initials of
Cypherer or Coder

Time of Receipt in
Cypher or Coding
Office

Date.

XC

Xc

N.M.E.D.

0710Z

15/8/45.

For use in
Cypher or
Coding Office
only

(3) (THE BRITISH ADVICE AFTER JAPAN SURRENDERED).

Originators Instructions:
(Indication of Priority,
Personal, NOTWT
For Exercise)

URGENT.

INTERCEPT GROUP.

TO:

ALL ALLIED WARSHIPS.

From:

NOIC D.

H.M. Government has announced that the Japanese have surrendered (2) all offensive action to cease forthwith (3) some time may elapse before the actual instrument of surrender is signed, therefore it is clear Japanese forces have received instructions of their High Command According danger of attack by individual U Boat and Aircraft may exist for some time to come

11 151009

Book or Table to be used for		Initials of Cypherer or Coder	Time of Receipt in Cypher or Coding Office	Date.
Cyphering or Coding.	Recyphering or Recoding.			
P/L	P/L	JAW	1415 Z	15/8/45.