

THOUGHTS ABOUT "WHY DIGITAL."

1. Digital is approximately equal to CW in weak signal ability to successfully pass messages. There are instances when each is superior to the other. Both CW and digital are superior to phone in weak signal conditions.

2. Digital is superior to both CW and phone in accuracy. Also, the messages handled via digital circuits present themselves in printed form which eliminates the problems most of us have, even with our own handwriting. Current software allows for compression which reduces the size of a given message to be transmitted and also adds more error checking functions.

3. Since most PMBO's operate continuously (except maybe during threats of lightning damage) they offer more opportunities to transmit traffic and thus better speed than the voice nets. The software in use allows for scheduled fully automatic forwarding throughout the day.

4. Usually, and especially under good signal conditions over longer paths, digital can pass messages faster than they can be read by human operators. For these reasons digital is a better choice

for Local, Area and Region operations. It must be stressed that digital can only augment and never replace local and section nets because of the origination and delivery functions.

5. Contrary to present practice, digital is more suited than phone for non-tactical emergency communications. In situations where accuracy is critical digital is the only choice. Appropriate equipment and support will have to be provided for digital to provide the support that it is capable of to served agencies.