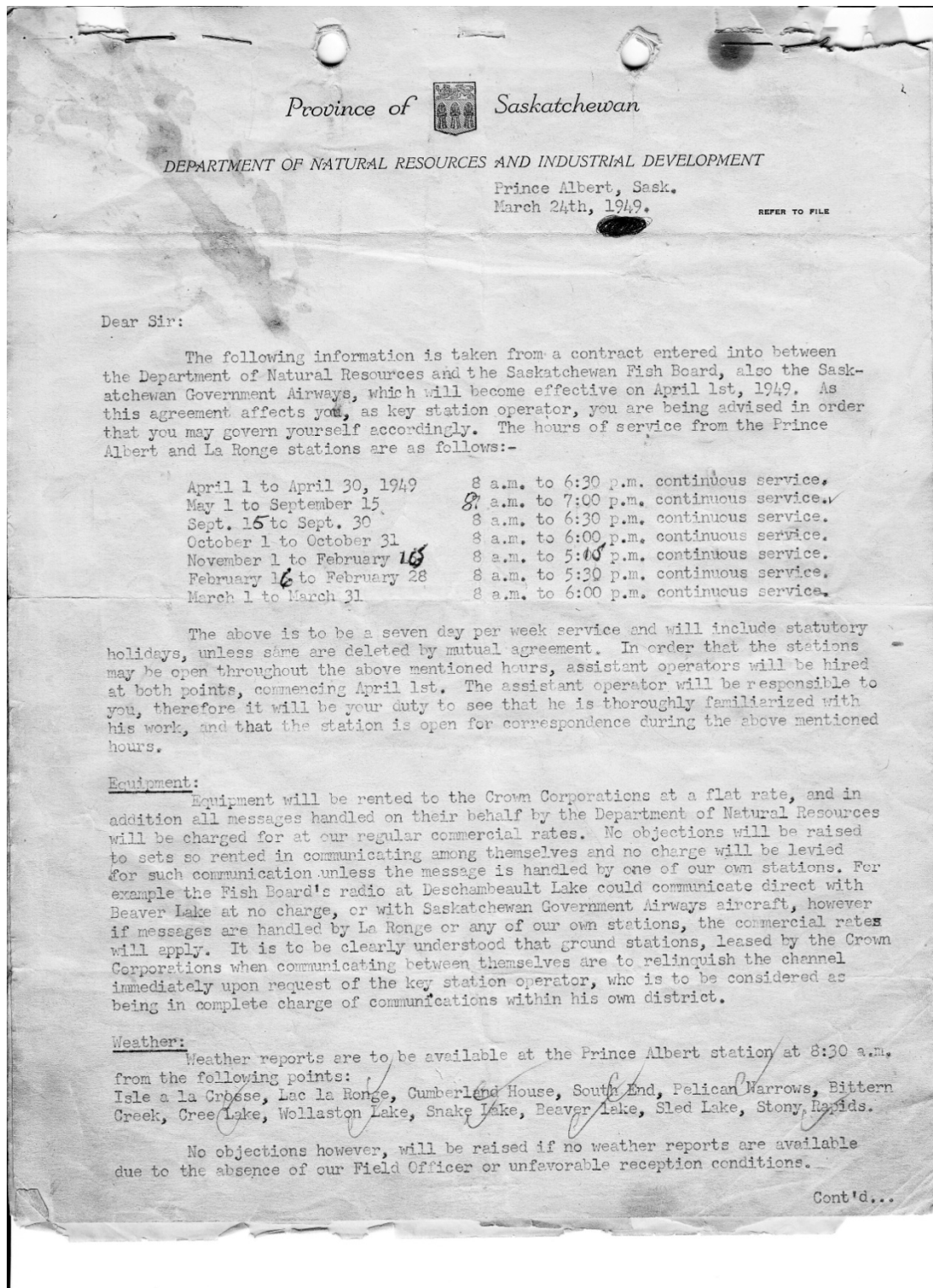


The Memo dated 1949 that set out the hours of Keystation operation until 24 hour service began circa 1984



The memo dated March 24, 1949 was signed by Ron Hook (Radio Engineer) and sent to ***Department of Natural Resources and Industry Development*** Keystations of Prince Albert and La Ronge. This memo outlines the hours of operation of the Keystations through out the year. This memo was the “authority” which was in effect until 24 hour operation began circa 1984. It also names the radio stations that were to send in weather reports directly to, or via La Ronge (XLB51) to Prince Albert (XLB50), to be forwarded by telephone. The reporting radio stations were at Ile-a-la-Crosse, Lac La Ronge, Cumberland House, South End, Pelican Narrows, Bittern Creek, Cree Lake, Wollaston Lake, Snake Lake (Pinehouse), Beaver Lake, Sled Lake and Stony Rapids.

This memo turned the Keystations into two man stations open 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The operators worked 7 days on and 7 days off. Prince Albert Operators worked Saturday to Friday shift while La Ronge worked Monday to Sunday shift. This arrangement worked for 35 years.

May 1 to September 15 the hours originally were 7:00 am to 7:00 pm for many years until the collective agreement (Union) shortened the 40 hour week. ( in the '70's ??)

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Weather Continued....

Weather reports originating from Saskatchewan Fish Board stations will naturally not be charged for at commercial rates, nor will weather reports originating from our own stations as a flat rate per annum has been set covering these reports from the above mentioned stations.

Messages:

Whenever possible, all messages must be in written form and will be charged for at regular commercial rates. Any traffic other than written messages which the Crown Corporations insist be handled, will be charged for at commercial rates taking our operators word count as final, this practice however, is to be discouraged as it may lead to confusion. Messages handled on behalf of any parties or organizations other than the Department of Natural Resources or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, are to be considered as commercial messages and are to be charged for at the regular rates.

Message Priority:

A priority system for the handling of messages during peak periods will be established on the following basis:

- a. Aircraft in distress
- b. Sickness
- c. Fire and routine aircraft position reports
- d. Messages considered by the sender and the radio operator as being important.
- e. Routine messages.

It has been pointed out that insofar as priority of messages is concerned the judgement of the operator will prevail in all cases and his decision will be considered as final.

Delivery:

With regard to the delivery of messages, it has been pointed out that the Department will not be held responsible for the non delivery of messages due to atmospheric conditions, the break-down of equipment and other unforeseen and uncontrollable factors.

Aircraft Position Reports:

A log of all aircraft calls and position reports is to be kept, and this information is to be available from the Prince Albert station when requested by the Saskatchewan Government Airways. A flat rate has been established covering each contact between Saskatchewan Government Airways aircraft and our key stations, the only exceptions being aircraft which are chartered by the Department of Natural Resources for forest fire patrol or suppression purposes, and the reporting of forest fires by Aircraft while on regular runs or when chartered by parties other than the Department of Natural Resources. It is desired that a record of such contacts be kept, however they are to be separated from the regular aircraft position reports in order to avoid billing the company for such reports. The words "fire patrol" or "fire report" should be included in the "comments" column in such cases. These forms should be completed and totalled promptly at the end of each month and forwarded to the Radio Branch in triplicate in order that the monthly bill may be submitted with the least possible delay.

Cont'd....

This part of the memo reveals that The Saskatchewan Fish Board paid a flat yearly rate so Operators didn't have to bill for their traffic. The same applied for Department of Natural Resources and RCMP calls and messages.

The next section relates to priority of traffic which is still in effect today. There is also the disclaimer as to delayed or non delivery of messages due to uncontrollable factors. The strength in the radio system was even during bad static or poor signals, someone could usually pass on emergency messages from station to station like moccasin telegraph.

The last paragraph refers to aircraft position reports of the SGA aircraft. The aircraft had to call in at specific times and/or locations and the position report forwarded to Prince Albert. At times SGA had many aircraft reporting in so this became a large part of the Radio Operators workload until SGA developed its own radio network in later years.

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Commercial Messages:

The Prince Albert station will record on the prescribed form all commercial messages which pass through, and submit these forms to the Radio Branch in triplicate promptly at the end of each month. It is suggested that for the sake of simplicity when presenting the monthly bill, that all Saskatchewan Fish Board messages be on a separate sheet or sheets and that the same procedure be followed with Saskatchewan Government Airways messages, while all other commercial messages could be grouped together on another separate sheet or sheets. The remaining key stations will furnish a triplicate monthly report on the prescribed form covering all commercial messages which are not in any way handled by the Prince Albert station, this procedure will eliminate any possibility of messages "slipping through" on which revenue is collectable.

Yours very truly,

*R. Hook*

R. Hook  
Radio Engineer.

RH/cd

This last page tells the Keystations to send in a month end "Traffic Report" in triplicate. This meant using two pages of "carbon paper" and really hitting those typewriter keys hard. There were no photocopiers in those days.