University of Hyderabad

Understanding Workplace Genres in Military Engineer Services

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Genre in MES

- Genre = **goal-oriented, staged professional text**

- Each genre has:
    - A clear purpose
    - Predictable structure
    - Typical language patterns

Context of Situation (FTM)

- Every professional text is shaped by:
- **Field** – what is happening
- **Tenor** – who is communicating, and their relationship
- **Mode** – how language is use

Field

- Nature of activity

- Type of work being done

- Technical or operational focus
  Example: inspection, repair, approval, reporting

Tenor

- Relationship between writer and reader
- Authority, responsibility, accountability
- Level of formality and obligation

Mode

- Written or spoken
- Planned or spontaneous
- Informational or interactive

Why Genres Matter in mES

- **Task 1: Reflection (5 minutes)**
  - List **three different written documents** you regularly read or write in MES.

  a. _____
  b. _____
  c. _____

- What problems can occur if:

  - the **wrong type of document** is used?
  - the **tone or style** does not match the situation?

Common MES documents

- Inspection Report
- SITREP
- SOP
- Technical Description
- Justification / Office Note
- Incident / Accident Report
- Operational Brief / Project Brief

Problems if genre is misused:

- Wrong decisions taken
- Delays in approvals
- Accountability issues
- Safety risks
- Loss of professional credibility

Why Genres Matter in MES

- Engineering work depends on **written texts**

- Decisions are taken based on **reports, briefs, and notes**

- Communication failures are often **genre failures**, not technical failures

- Officers must control **meaning**, not only correctness

Task 2: IDENTIFYING MES WORKPLACE GENRES

Below are **short extracts** from seven common MES genres. Match each text to the correct MES genre.

1. The 500 KL overhead water tank is a reinforced concrete structure supported on six columns. The tank is provided with an internal epoxy coating to prevent corrosion and contamination.

2. Ensure that the electrical supply is isolated before commencing maintenance work. Verify that all safety locks are engaged prior to opening the panel.

3. The resurfacing work of the internal road at Station X will commence on 20 August 2026. The activity is expected to be completed within four weeks, subject to weather conditions.

4. As on 0700 hours, water supply to Block F remains suspended due to pipeline damage. Repair work is ongoing, and restoration is expected by 1600 hours.

5. During inspection, corrosion was observed on the support brackets of the air-handling unit. The system is currently functional but requires immediate corrective maintenance.

6. It is proposed to replace the existing lighting fixtures with LED units in order to reduce energy consumption and maintenance costs. Approval is requested for necessary procurement.

7. On 14 September 2026 at 1030 hours, a minor fire occurred in the electrical distribution panel of Workshop No. 1. The fire was extinguished using a CO_2 extinguisher, and no injuries were reported.

Genre Options

- Technical Description
- Procedure / SOP
- Operational Briefing
- Situation Report (SITREP)
- Inspection / Condition Report
- Request / Justification Memo
- Incident Report

Text	Correct Genre	Key Linguistic Cue
Text 1	Technical Description	Relational processes; component description
Text 2	Procedure / SOP	Imperatives; step-wise safety focus
Text 3	Operational Briefing	Future-oriented planning; scope & timeline
Text 4	SITREP	Present status; time reference; neutrality
Text 5	Inspection / Condition Report	Observation + evaluation
Text 6	Request / Justification Memo	Proposal + justification
Text 7	Incident Report	Past event; time, action, outcome

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WHAT MAKES EACH GENRE DIFFERENT?
For each text, answer the following questions:

- **Purpose**
  - What is the main purpose of this text?
  - What decision or action does it support?

- **Time Orientation**
  - Is the focus on:
    Description
    Instructions
    Present status
    Past event
    Future plan

- **Tone**
  - Is the language:
    Neutral
    Directive
    Evaluative
    Persuasive

- **Risk if Misused**
  - What could go wrong if this text were written in the style of another genre?

- **Purpose**
- Technical Description → Shared technical understanding
- SOP → Safe, standardised action
- SITREP → Enable command decisions
- Incident Report → Record and accountability
- Inspection Report → Condition assessment
- Justification Memo → Approval seeking
- Operational Brief → Inform before execution

- **Time Orientation**
- Description → Timeless
- SOP → Generic / procedural
- SITREP → Present / ongoing
- Incident Report → Past
- Briefing → Future

- **Tone**
- SOP → Directive
- SITREP / Incident → Neutral
- Inspection → Evaluative but evidence-based
- Memo → Persuasive but formal

Now examine **one text only**
Complete the table using your own words.

Aspect	Your Answer
Field (What is happening?)	
Tenor (Who is writing to whom?)	
Mode (How is the message delivered?)	

Indicative answers (will vary by text):

- **Field:**
  Operational status / inspection findings / procedural action / incident details

- **Tenor:**
  Officer to superior authority; institutional; formal; accountable

- **Mode:**
  Written; planned; formal; informational

Task 5: Spot the Problem

- Read the sentence below.
  - Immediate action must be taken, and strict responsibility will be fixed for this failure.

- In which **genres** would this sentence be **inappropriate**? (Indicate all that apply.)
  - SITREP
    Incident Report
    SOP
    Technical Description

- Why could this sentence cause **professional or administrative problems** if used incorrectly?

- **Inappropriate genres for the sentence:**
  ✔ SITREP
  ✔ Incident Report
  ✔ Technical Description

- **Appropriate genre:**

- Administrative warning / disciplinary communication

- **Why problematic:**

- Introduces blame

- Violates neutrality

- Exceeds genre authority

For each situation, write the most appropriate MES genre.

Situation   Appropriate Genre

Reporting current status of water supply failure

Recording details of an electrical accident

Requesting approval for additional funds

Explaining components of a new pump system

Giving step-by-step safety instructions

Updating command before execution of work

Assessing condition of a building

Situation	Correct Genre
Current status of water supply failure	SITREP
Electrical accident details	Incident Report
Requesting additional funds	Request / Justification Memo
Explaining pump components	Technical Description
Step-by-step safety instructions	SOP
Update before execution	Operational Briefing
Assessing building condition	Inspection / Condition Report

Complete the table for the given SITREP extract.
As on 0600 hours, power supply to Sector C remains disrupted due to transformer malfunction. Repair work is in progress.

Dimension	Description	Linguistic Evidence
Field		
Tenor		
Mode		

Identify the genre (text type).

- The Diesel Generator Set (DG Set) is a self-contained power generation system designed to provide continuous electrical supply at remote MES worksites. The set consists of a diesel engine, alternator, control panel, cooling system, and fuel supply unit.

- The diesel engine converts chemical energy into mechanical energy, which is transmitted to the alternator through a direct coupling. The alternator then converts mechanical energy into electrical power. The control panel regulates voltage, frequency, and load distribution.

- To operate the DG Set, the fuel level and engine oil must first be checked. The cooling system is then inspected for leaks. Once all parameters are within limits, the start switch is activated and the system is allowed to stabilize before load application.

Questions

- **Field:**
  - What technical processes are being described?
  - Which material processes (e.g., *converts, transmits*) are used?

- **Tenor:**
  - Is the writer giving instructions or describing facts?
  - What grammatical features show authority but neutrality?

- **Mode:**
  - Is the text intended for spoken briefing or written reference?
  - How does paragraph structure support close reading?

Explicit Field–Tenor–Mode (FTM) Alignment Table

Element	Description
Field	Mechanical and electrical power generation processes
Tenor	Expert to trained professional (engineer to engineer)
Mode	Written, monologic, technical reference

Mapping to MES Documentation & Reporting Practice

MES Document	Relevance
Equipment Technical Manual	Direct model
Project Technical Annex	Descriptive section
Training Notes	Familiarisation reading