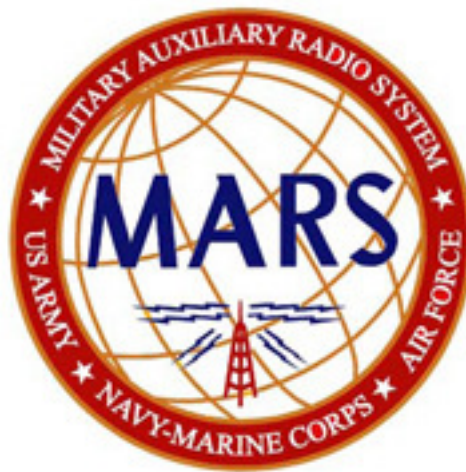


**U.S. Navy-Marine Corps  
Military Auxiliary Radio System  
(MARS)**



**Student Guide for Voice SOP  
Net Control Training**

**Region 10  
NNN0AS0 FOUR**

12/27/2009

# VOICE SOP - NET CONTROL STATION (NCS) TRAINING

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this net is to review the net control material as published in the "Joint MARS Voice SOP". Later if changes are made to the SOP, we will cover the changes with another refresher net.

The voice procedures as stated in the SOP are also being used by Army and Air Force MARS so we all do it the same way.

Those of you that do not have a copy of the "Joint MARS Voice SOP", can download it from the region, area and national websites. Any questions over?

## JOINT MARS SOP

During the training net series we will cover the following sections from the Voice SOP. The two number 5 sections in the Voice SOP will be referenced as 5a and 5b during the training nets. There is no number 6.

- 2 - General Procedures
- 3 - Opening a Net
- 4 - Free and Directed Net Status
- 5a - Abbreviated Call Signs
- 5b - Changing Net Control Station
- 7 - Passing Traffic
- 8 - Closing Down

Future NET CONTROL STATION training nets will repeat these sections and cover other sections from the Voice SOP not covered on this net.

## **VSOP 2 - General Procedures**

Nets are under the direct and immediate control of the NET CONTROL STATION. The NET CONTROL STATION is responsible to maintain net discipline at all times.

It is often expedient to have a station assigned in advance as the ALTERNATE NET CONTROL STATION, or for the NET CONTROL STATION to designate a station at the start of the net.

When stations are checked into the net, they are expected to use prescribed procedures at all times. Transmissions shall be short and concise, consistent with clarity.

All stations will only use authorized prowords and in accordance with their proper meaning only.

Record traffic is first listed with the NET CONTROL, but not necessarily on the first net call up. Record traffic is only passed to another station at the direction of the NET CONTROL STATION, and only when the net is in a DIRECTED NET status.

## **VSOP 3 - Opening a Net**

The NET CONTROL STATION will make sufficient call ups at the start of the net in an effort to capture all the stations wishing to check in.

The NET CONTROL STATION will then proceeds with handling listed traffic then any other net business and comments between stations.

Training should be conducted as required, or as directed by competent authority. Training will always be done with the net in DIRECTED NET status.

At the designated time of the net, the NET CONTROL STATION will call the net as follows depending on whether the conditions good or poor.

## Conditions Good

NET CONTROL starts the net with a call up by transmitting:

0X5C, 0X5C, THIS IS NNN0AAA, OVER

The net designator is stated only twice in the first net call up. This call up serves multiple functions. It announces the net, puts the net in DIRECTED NET mode, and authorizes stations to transmit for such purposes as checking in and listing traffic.

Stations can now check in according to the following examples. It is essential that every station, listen carefully to avoid doubling. Examples:

NNN0AAA (pause) THIS IS NNN0BBB, NO TRAFFIC, OVER

NNN0AAA (pause) THIS IS NNN0CCC, REQUEST COMMS NNN0BBB, OVER

NNN0AAA (pause) THIS IS NNN0GGG, ONE ROUTINE DDD, OVER

The NET CONTROL STATION now acknowledges all check ins, in the order that stations checked in. As an example NET CONTROL transmits:

NNN0BBB, NNN0CCC, NNN0GGG THIS IS NNN0AAA, ROGER, OUT

If NET CONTROL did not fully hear a station, for example NNN0CCC, the NET CONTROL STATION withholds acknowledging that station, then finishes the remainder of the acknowledgements, and then transmits:

NNN0CCC, THIS IS NNN0AAA, SAY AGAIN OVER

If NET CONTROL heard a station, but did not hear the call sign, or only part of the call sign, NET CONTROL transmits an unknown station call up.

Note that only stations who attempted check in, but were not acknowledged are authorized to transmit at this time.

If you have a relay of that station, hold it for the next regular call up. If you call the NET CONTROL STATION during the unknown station call, you may be doubling with the unknown station that NET CONTROL is trying to hear.

NET CONTROL transmits:

UNKNOWN STATION, THIS IS NNN0AAA, OVER

### **Conditions Poor**

When conditions are poor, the NET CONTROL STATION will transmit the call up using words twice, without using the proword WORDS TWICE. Example:

0X5C, 0X5C, THIS IS NNN0AAA, NNN0AAA, OVER

Upon hearing the call up with words twice, stations checking in will do so as under **Conditions Good** example above by transmitting:

NNN0AAA THIS IS BBB, NO TRAFFIC, OVER

### **VSOP 4 - Free and Directed Net Status**

All nets will always begin in DIRECTED NET status. This means every station must have NET CONTROL permission to transmit. When the NET CONTROL STATION says "OUT", they are not expecting any further contact or conversation until the next regular net call up.

Record traffic may only be passed when the net is in a DIRECTED NET status.

After traffic has been handled, and while the net is still in DIRECTED NET status, any necessary or prescribed training shall be conducted by NET CONTROL, designated training staff, or the state, area, or region director.

After all traffic, training, and net business has been handled, the NET CONTROL STATION may put the net into FREE NET status if FREE NET is authorized for that net.

FREE NET means stations may contact each other directly

without prior permission of the NET CONTROL STATION. A station may exchange informal comments with another station with the following limitations:

- (1) All comments must, in some way, relate to MARS business or the mission of MARS.
- (2) Comments need to be brief, consistent with clarity.
- (3) Stations must pause between turnovers in their transmission to allow for another station to break in.
- (4) NET CONTROL may interrupt an exchange at any time and stop the exchange by calling a DIRECTED NET.

### **VSOP 5a - Abbreviated Call Signs**

After the NET CONTROL STATION makes the first net call up, and at the NET CONTROLS discretion, NET CONTROL may authorize the use of abbreviated call signs, provided such use is permitted on that net.

Full call signs must be used upon initial check in and any time NET CONTROL directs the use of full call signs.

When abbreviated call signs have been authorized, full call signs remain an acceptable option.

The NET CONTROL STATION may, and at NET CONTROLS STATIONS discretion, change back to full call signs at any time.

Examples of changing abbreviated call sign authorizations:  
An example of authorizing abbreviated call signs:

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0X5C THIS IS NNN0AAA, ABBREVIATED CALL SIGNS AUTHORIZED,  
OUT
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An example of switching back to full call signs:

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0X5C, THIS IS NNN0AAA, USE FULL CALL SIGNS, OUT
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### **VSOP 5b - Changing Net Control Station**

Occasionally it may be necessary or desirable to transfer net control to another station. This could be for a brief period or for the duration of the net. Assuming NNN0CCC is the NET CONTROL STATION and wishes to transfer control to NNN0AAA, he/she would say:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, ASSUME CONTROL, OVER

NNN0CCC, THIS IS NNN0AAA, ROGER OUT.

(NNN0AAA is now the NET CONTROL STATION. NNN0AAA will immediately make a call up)

OX5C, THIS IS NNN0AAA, OVER

- (1) This notifies the net that NNN0AAA has assumed control, puts the net in directed mode, and authorizes stations to check in or otherwise contact the NET CONTROL.
- (2) Variations could include some instruction from NET CONTROL to NNN0AAA such as:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, ASSUME CONTROL FOR 10 MINUTES, OVER

or

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, ASSUME CONTROL UNTIL 1515Z, OVER (here a time was stated)

- (3) When NNN0CCC returns and wishes to resume control, NNN0CCC will, at a net call up or on a free net, transmit:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, I ASSUME CONTROL, OVER

- (4) At this point, NNN0AAA will acknowledge NNN0CCC and notify NNN0CCC of any changes in net status, new traffic listings, traffic passed, and stations that checked in or closed down while NNN0AAA was net control.
- (5) NNN0CCC will acknowledge this information then make a

net call up.

Note: It is never acceptable for NNN0CCC to tell NNN0AAA, "I was monitoring the entire time and have all the information." This does not confirm to NNN0AAA that NNN0CCC in fact does have all the information.)

### **Loss of Net Control Station**

- (1) It may happen that NET CONTROL STATION suddenly, and without warning, disappears from the net. This could be due to equipment failure, power outage, sudden change in propagation, or any number of reasons. If an ALTERNATE NET CONTROL STATION has been assigned in advance and he or she suspects something has happened to the NET CONTROL STATION, that station will first attempt to contact NET CONTROL. If no contact is made, the ALTERNATE NET CONTROL STATION will ASSUME CONTROL, make a call up, and proceeds as outlined above.
- (2) If no ALTERNATE NET CONTROL STATION has been designated any station who hears the net well, shall assume ALTERNATE NET CONTROL STATION duties.

### **VSOP 7 - Passing Traffic**

When ready, the NET CONTROL STATION will call stations to pass their traffic, based on the precedence of each message and the availability of addressee(s) or another station to relay that traffic. The NET CONTROL STATION will then direct the holding station on how to proceed.

Example A:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, CALL NNN0BBB PASS ONE  
PRIORITY NNN0SAA, OUT

NNN0BBB, THIS IS NNN0AAA, ONE PRIORITY OVER

(Assuming NNN0BBB copies NNN0AAA well, he sends)

NNN0AAA THIS IS NNN0BBB, OVER

THIS IS NNN0AAA MESSAGE, RELAY PRIORITY

(continue with the message header and text, pausing approximately ever 20 seconds to allow for a station with higher precedence traffic to break in.)

NNN0AAA ends his/her transmission with OVER, or in the case where there are additional messages to send to this station, NNN0AAA would say, MORE TO FOLLOW, OVER

Assuming NNN0BBB copied the message completely and does not need repetitions he sends:

THIS IS NNN0BBB, ROGER OUT

(or, to accept another message he would say)

THIS IS NNN0BBB, ROGER OVER

Example B:

If NNN0BBB does not copy well, he must notify NNN0AAA of the problem using correct radio check prowords:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0BBB, WEAK READABLE, OVER

or

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0BBB, UNREADABLE, OVER

## **Breaking the Net**

- (1) A station may interrupt the current flow of communications on a net if he or she has a communication of higher importance which must be conveyed as quickly as possible.

Such communications include:

- (a) record traffic of a higher precedence than the traffic being passed;
  - (b) non-record traffic communication for one or more stations that is urgent, time sensitive, and may impact the safety of persons or property.
- (2) The station wishing to break the net should wait for the next natural pause in the communication currently taking place; preferably waiting for the end of that communication.
- (3) The content of the breaking station's communication should be the determining factor for establishing urgency, not simply that the station has, for example, a PRIORITY precedence message and a ROUTINE message is currently being sent.
- (4) Breaking the net is a rare event. Normally, waiting a minute or two is not going to make a difference. If the breaking station knows the current communication is lengthy or several messages are going to be sent then interrupting may be necessary.

Example:

When a station has determined it is essential to break the net he or she shall wait for a pause in the current transmission.

He or she will then transmit the precedence of his/her traffic three times, e.g.:

PRIORITY, PRIORITY, PRIORITY (pause) NNN0CCC, THIS IS NNN0AAA, OVER

(The pause is to see that the other station has heard and is not continuing his or her transmission.)

The NET CONTROL STATION will then transmit:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, OVER

NNN0AAA will then list his or her traffic or reason for breaking the net.

If it is evident that NET CONTROL does not hear the breaking station any station on the net may relay by calling NET CONTROL and advising him or her of the breaking station. This should normally be one of the stations being interrupted.

If NET CONTROL hears the breaking station, but it appears the station currently engaged in communications did not, NET CONTROL will acknowledge the breaking station by transmitting:

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0CCC, WAIT OUT

NET CONTROL will then take steps to regain control of the net.

### **Requesting Radio Check**

- (1) If a station first wishes to determine how well another station hears him/her the station asks for a radio check.

NNN0AAA, THIS IS NNN0BBB, RADIO CHECK OVER

- (2) If NNN0AAA copies NNN0BBB well, NNN0AAA will reply:

NNN0BBB, THIS IS NNN0AAA, LOUD AND CLEAR, OVER

- (3) Only authorized radio check phrases will be used. The use of ROGER to mean LOUD and CLEAR is not an adequate response since ROGER simply means "I copied your transmission correctly". It does not adequately state the condition.

### **VSOP 8 - Closing Down**

Stations checking into a net are normally expected to be able to remain on the net for it's duration. Any station wishing to check out prior to end of net will call the NET CONTROL STATION, during a net call up or on a FREE NET, to request permission.

The NET CONTROL STATION may authorize the station to close if the NET CONTROL believes there will be no further need for that station. As an example, NNN0EEE wishes to leave the net:

NNN0AAA THIS IS NNN0EEE, REQUEST TO CLOSE DOWN, OVER

NET CONTROL responds with...

NNN0EEE THIS IS NNN0AAA, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

The NET CONTROL STATION may acknowledge the request, but may delay authorization as in:

NNN0EEE THIS IS NNN0AAA, WAIT, OUT

A station may have listed COMMS for the net or new traffic may have been listed for NNN0EEE.

Stations may request a time to close down when they initially check in, example:

NNN0AAA THIS IS NNN0EEE, NO TRAFFIC, REQUEST TO CLOSE DOWN AT 1520Z, OVER

When acknowledging check ins, the NET CONTROL STATION may require NNN0EEE to wait for future authorization or he may grant the permission at that time, example:

NNN0EEE THIS IS NNN0AAA, CLOSE DOWN AT 1520Z, OUT

Stations who have listed traffic during a check in shall not be given permission to close down until a disposition has been reached regarding all traffic listed by that station.

Traffic must be passed to another station, delivered to the addressees, or the station agrees to take it to another net. But remember, traffic may only be passed during DIRECTED NET status.

When its time for a net to end, and NET CONTROL STATION is satisfied that all traffic has been handled, the NET

CONTROL will close the net as follows:

OX5B THIS IS NNN0AAA, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

When the net has been CLOSED, there will be no further use of the frequency until the next scheduled net.

For those of you that don't have a copy of the "Joint MARS Voice SOP", its available on the Region Ten, Pacific Area and National NMCM web sites. Also on the Region Ten web site, under the table of contents, bottom right, is a link to the updated Region Ten NCS training manual. Both are good to have available during the training.