

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



**NCS Training Guide
Region 10**

NNN0AS0 FOUR

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Region 10 NET CONTROL (NCS) Training Guide

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General Information

The purpose of this net is to provide you with the information you will need to become an informed and effective Net Control Station (NCS). We will be discussing station needs, statements, terms and methods.

Net control stations are assigned to a specific net by the Net Manager, who selects qualified operators from a pool of trained communicators.

All NMC MARS members must be trained and able to be a NCS. The most important aspect of being the NCS is the establishment, of the fact, that you are in charge of the net. You must control the net. You must be firm, positive and decisive. The decisions you make are final, and will not be challenged on the air.

In the event you make an error on the net, you are answerable only to the Area/Region/State Directors, the Deputy Area Director, and the Area/Region/State Net Managers.

You should correct your errors, and you may ask for information to help you with your decisions. But NO OTHER STATIONS can question your decisions during the net.

Duties and Responsibilities

Some of the more important responsibilities of the NCS include:

1. Insuring the net is convened on time.
2. Insuring the net is conducted on the correct frequency.
3. Maintaining net discipline.
4. Insuring that traffic is handled in the correct order of precedence and by type of message.
5. Assisting members, new members (Tangos) and training officers with discussion of correct procedures.

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6. Assisting the region or area staff with training during slack net time. Whenever possible, allow any net training to occur prior to stations closing.
7. Informing the Net Manager of any net activities you feel warrant attention, recommending or suggesting changes or improvements.
8. Forwarding all required net reports.

Running the Net

In order for you to maintain a smooth running net, you need to prepare your station with the following items:

1. NTP8(d)draft manual
2. Pacific Area Operations Guide
3. Standard Operating Procedure for Calling and Operating a Voice Net (Joint MARS Voice SOP)
4. Region 10 Membership Roster
5. Region 10 Staff Roster
6. Traffic Rep List

Before calling the net, arrange your operating position. The log/check-in sheet should be ready for the recording of stations checking in, plus their guard, traffic, any comments, what listed cities they will protect, and the time the net is closed.

When ready to call the net, the NCS calls:

0X1B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, OVER

All stations with or without traffic to list, will check-in.

NCS can limit check ins to any logical limitation of station type (Voice SOP 3.f.(3) "Limiting Check-ins", last example). Limiting check-ins should be used sparingly.

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There are only three deviations from this standard statement:

1. When the NCS is bringing traffic to the net. Add to your net call-up:

0X2B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, I LIST ONE ROUTINE NNN0AS0
THIRTEEN, OVER

2. The NCS may make a call, making a net traffic listing. This should be done on an as-needed basis.

0X1B THIS IS NNN0NCS, THE NET HOLDS 1 PRIORITY NNN0AS0,
NNN0ASE, 2 ROUTINE SEATTLE, 1 ROUTINE BOISE, 1 ROUTINE
REDMOND WA, OUT

0X1B, THIS IS, NNN0NCS, OVER

3. In situations of poor propagation, if the NCS directs another station to call the net, to see if others might hear that station better, use the following statement:

0X2B, 0X2B, THIS IS NNN0DDD, NNN0DDD, OVER

After the stations have checked in, acknowledge the stations in the SAME ORDER that they checked in. You use their full call sign, even if abbreviated call signs have been authorized. If for some reason, you did not understand the check-in information of a station, call that station and say:

NNN0AAA THIS IS NNN0TTT, SAY AGAIN, OVER

or

UNKNOWN STATION, UNKNOWN STATION, THIS IS NNN0TTT, NNN0TTT,
WORDS TWICE, WORDS TWICE, OVER

Nothing more is required. Don't try to tell the station what you did understand or didn't understand.

Just ask the station to: "SAY AGAIN OVER", or "WORDS TWICE OVER". That is all.

If you didn't understand the call sign of a station, give another net call instead of trying to explain who they checked in before, or after.

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Most stations don't keep track of that kind of information. Stations are listening for your acknowledgment, and when they don't hear their call, they will try to check-in at the next call-up.

When the NCS is ready to direct traffic, according to precedence, the NCS would make the call:

NNN0DDD THIS IS NNN0TTT, CALL NNN0BBB AND PASS YOUR ONE ROUTINE, NNN0ASO THIRTEEN, OUT

Stations Closing Early

When stations request permission to "CLOSE DOWN", it is not necessary to repeat back what they said. If they didn't use the correct request, for example:

THIS IS NNN0MMM, REQUEST PERMISSION TO CLOSE DOWN ABOUT 8:30

or if you didn't understand the request, just say:

NNN0MMM, THIS IS NNN0TTT, SAY AGAIN, OVER

If any traffic needs to be sent to a station that needs to close down early, it may be passed out of order.

An example of closing down stations:

NNN0AAA, NNN0BBB, THIS IS NNN0TTT, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

Military Auspice Station Check-In

When a military auspice station checks in and gives you the call sign(s) of the operator(s) on duty, make sure you acknowledge the operator(s) as well as the station.

Member Stations With Guest Members

When a station checks in and includes another station in the check-in, acknowledge both station call signs.

If any traffic is listed for the second operator, it should go to the check-in station for relay.

Example:

NNN0TTT, THIS IS NNN0AAA, NO TRAFFIC, ALSO CHECK-IN NNN0BBB,
NO TRAFFIC, OVER

Abbreviated Call-Signs

The NCS may authorized abbreviated call signs. You may want to do it after the second check-in acknowledgment, or you may do it later.

Example:

0X2B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, ABBREVIATED CALLS AUTHORIZED, OUT

The net goes faster if you don't have to use full call signs (except for the net control station).

Get in the habit of doing it in a certain order, so that its not forgotten.

Free Nets

After all traffic has been passed, all training is complete, and listed comments are finished, you may declare a free net. This allows stations to call other stations without going through the NCS.

Example:

0X1B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, THIS IS A FREE NET, OUT

You should make a free net declaration after each series of comments is completed, or each minute or two if no one is commenting.

This will inform any late arriving stations, or stations who had to leave the net for a few minutes, of the status of the net.

Important: If later in the net stations list traffic. Remember to make a net call if traffic is to be passed. This brings the net back to a "DIRECTED NET".

Example:

0X2B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, OVER

or

0X2B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, THIS IS A DIRECTED NET, OVER

Handling Traffic

Remember, the primary purpose of the net is to provide an organized approach to moving traffic. The NCS is the conductor in this traffic flow.

The NCS decides what messages are sent, to what stations, and in what order. The NCS needs to make decisions, based on region requirements for dividing the traffic up.

Whenever there is a large amount of traffic listed, utilizing the alternate frequency is a good idea. It speeds things up, and reduces the pressure on the NCS to move too quickly.

If an Army or Air Force MARS station advises that they can deliver a message, accept their offer and send the message to that station. If the station knowingly chooses to pay a toll, that is their decision.

Correcting Errors and Procedures

Even though the NCS of the net has the responsibility of correcting procedural errors made by members, this is a task which needs some fore-thought and tact.

It is tough to do it without ruffling a few feathers. Almost all of us are easily upset when someone points out an error we have made. Much of it is anger at ourselves for making an error, but we tend to try and defend our positions.

You may ask a training officer for assistance in handling the corrections.

Secondly, we all have our pride and don't like to be lectured when other members are listening. We don't take criticism all that well.

Stations that make errors, should hear about them. But rather than calling the station and telling what was done wrong, a

better tactic would be to ask if a training assistant (Four) is on the net.

Ask them if they wish to comment on how to do a particular action.

As a Four, they may be much better prepared to discuss correct procedure usage.

Communication Improvement Memorandum (CIM)

Another way to handle this type of situation, is to utilize a Communication Improvement Memo (CIM).

A CIM can be written up and sent to the station in question, but be sure and have all the pertinent details on the CIM. Especially all the pertinent references.

Remember to info the CIM to NNN0AS0, NNN0AS0 ONE, NNN0AS0 FOUR and the receiving members state director. See NTP8(d) Chapter 5, Paragraph 509, Sub-Paragraph B, for more related information.

If in doubt, ask a training officer for assistance.

If you have a problem and don't know how to solve it, be sure and talk to your Net Manager.

Don't let it simmer and grow bigger. Your Net Manager will gladly work with you.

Stations Reporting Disasters or an Emergency

If any station reports a disaster or emergency, ask for whatever details they have been able to obtain.

If, in your judgment, you feel NMC-MARS should be standing by to provide assistance, then close the current net and open the state ECOM net.

Then, contact NNN0ASE TWO for help in opening the PA1E ECOM net if necessary.

Multiple Addressee Messages

A multiple address message may be of any precedence. The key to smooth movement of this type of message is in selecting the stations who will relay the message to the various addressees.

Once the choice is made, use NMC-MARS procedures and the message transmission will proceed smoothly.

The stations to be called, are listed in alphabetical order. This helps them to know when it's their turn to transmit their responses.

Don't make up your own phrases. Use the announcements listed in the manual. That way everyone on the net knows just what you mean.

Running the net is a serious endeavor, and when done efficiently and correctly, can be a source of much satisfaction.

Miscellaneous Notes

On the Net Activity Report, make sure the message count contains the count of all messages ROGER'ed for. Voice messages are recorded as SSB and digital are recorded as SCD.

Remember that the NCS will always use their full call sign, at all times. The NCS shouldn't respond to a check in by a station unless a net call up has been made. Don't acknowledge a station doing so.

A station may make an initial net check-in during a "Free Net" using a normal call to the NCS:

NNN0TTT, THIS IS NNN0GGG, NO TRAFFIC, OVER

If a station does not know who the NCS is, or is experiencing poor conditions, they may use the call-up:

NET CONTROL, THIS IS NNN0GGG, NO TRAFFIC, OVER

This information can be found in the Pacific Area Ops Guide, chapter 7, paragraph 2, sub-para K.3

Closing The Net

Prior to closing the net, make one last net call-up. If no one checks in, or has a request or comment, then send your net reports and make the closing announcement.

The net call-up is the approved manner of taking care of any business prior to closing the net.

Example:

OX2B, THIS IS NNN0TTT, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

NCS STATEMENTS

NET CALL UP

OX1B, THIS IS, NNN0FHA, OVER

NET CALL UP CONDITIONS POOR

OX1B, OX1B, THIS IS NNN0FHA, NNN0FHA, OVER
(net designator twice)

UNKNOWN STATION

UNKNOWN STATION, THIS IS NNN0FHA, OVER

UNKNOWN STATION ONLY COPYING PART OF CALL

UNKNOWN STATION, UNKNOWN STATION, THIS IS NNN0FHA, NNN0FHA
WORDS TWICE, WORDS TWICE, OVER

DIRECT THE TRAFFIC FLOW (example)

NNN0KUL, THIS IS NNN0FHA, CALL NNN0GJZ PASS ONE PRIORITY
NNN0GJZ, OUT

NNN0GJZ, THIS IS NNN0KUL, ONE PRIORITY, OVER

(Assuming GJZ copies KUL well, GJZ sends)

NNN0KUL, THIS IS NNN0GJZ, OVER (message is sent to NNN0GJZ)

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AUTHORIZE ABBREVIATED CALL SIGNS

OX1B, THIS IS NNN0FHA, ABBREVIATED CALLS AUTHORIZED, OUT

DECLARE A FREE NET

OX1B, THIS IS NNN0FHA, THIS IS A FREE NET, OUT

RETURNING TO FULL CALL SIGNS

OX1B, THIS IS NNN0FHA, USE FULL CALL SIGNS, OUT

CHANGING NET CONTROL

NNN0RDO, THIS IS NNN0FHA, ASSUME CONTROL, OVER
NNN0FHA, THIS IS NNN0RDO, ROGER OUT

OX1B, THIS IS NNN0RDO, OVER

or

NNN0RDO, THIS IS NNN0FHA, ASSUME CONTROL FOR 10 MINUTES,
OVER

or

NNN0RDO, THIS IS NNN0FHA, ASSUME CONTROL UNTIL (state a
time), OVER

(NNN0RDO is now NCS. NNN0RDO will immediately make a
net call up)

STATIONS WISHING TO CLOSE

NNN0FHA, THIS IS NNN0AMH, REQUEST TO CLOSE DOWN, OVER

NNN0AMH, THIS IS NNN0FHA, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

Note: NCS has the option to approve the close down or delay
his/her decision based on net activities.

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CLOSING THE NET

OX1B, THIS IS NNNØFHA, CLOSE DOWN, OUT

NCS Reporting

NCS are responsible for reporting net participation of members on each area, region or state net. Region/State net participation will be reported by message to NNNØASØ THIRTEEN using the PARTREPNET proforma message as shown below. The call sign of the Traffic rep station(s) shall be listed by the NCS of the called net. Message details can be found in the Pacific Area Operations Guide, Annex Z.

PARTREPNET FORMAT

R (DTG)
FM NNNØ____ (ST) call sign of NCS reporting
TO NNNØASØ THIRTEEN (ST)
BT
UNCLAS
PARTREPNET codeword for report type
A. FLFL net designator
B. YMMDD "ZULU" date of net
C. HH time of net duration in whole hours
D. LLL abbreviated call sign(s) of NCS
E. LLL abbreviated call sign of traffic rep
 station-leave blank if no traffic rep
 station, but include E.(period)
F. LLL LLL abbreviated call signs of net
 participants-NCS/traffic rep station
 repeated. List no Army/AF stations.
 Include military auspices stations.
BT

The next report the NCS is responsible for is the "Net Activity Report", (Frequency Usage Report). The NCSS is responsible for reporting net activity (time, frequency use, and message count). Region/State net activity will be reported by message to the respective Net Manager (GAO THREE ID, GCC THREE WA, GBP THREE OR) using the message format as shown below.

NET ACTIVITY REPORT FORMAT

R (DTG)
FM NNNØ____ (ST) call sign of NCS reporting
TO NNNØ____ (ST) call sign of Net Manager
BT
UNCLAS
SUBJ: NET ACTIVITY REPORT
A. FLFL net designator
B. FFF frequency Designator
C. XXX emission designator (SSB SCD)
D. YYMMDD "ZULU" date of net
E. HH time of net duration in whole hours
F. MM total messages handled during net
G. comments, if any
BT

Question Time

- 1 - Give me an initial net call-up for the 001C net?
- 2 - What acknowledgment does NCS use after stations check-in?
- 3 - What is the net call for authorizing abbreviated call signs?
- 4 - What is the net call for declaring a free net?
- 5 - What is the announcement for closing the net?
- 6 - What should a receiving station say when asking for a missed word?
- 7 - What should a receiving station say when questioning the accuracy of a message?
- 8 - What report does a NCS send to record member participation on a net?
- 9 - What report does a NCS send to report frequency usage?
- 10 - What's wrong with asking the NCS for permission to close at 7:30pm?