

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 3/02/09 - 3/06/09

Subject: MARS Call Signs

Reference: NTP8(d), Chapter 5, Paragraph 510

- a. Call sign assignment - Chief, NAVMARCORMARS, through area directors, the Afloat and Overseas Operations Network Coordinator and state directors, assigns MARS call signs from the NNNØAAA NNNØZZZ series. All MARS stations will be assigned a call sign from this block.

Requests for special assignments are not desired. Call signs are allocated by Chief, NAVMARCORMARS on a sequential basis, subject to some special reservations for administrative assignments. Detailed instructions for the assignment and use of MARS call signs and address designators are contained in ANNEX K.

b. Authority for use:

- (1) Use of MARS call signs normally shall be restricted to MARS networks. When specifically authorized by competent authority, MARS call signs may be used while representing NAVMARCORMARS on other U.S. Government agency networks.
- (2) U.S. Military and U.S. Government agency call signs may be used on MARS networks during actual or exercise communication emergencies or when otherwise authorized by competent authority.
- (3) The use of amateur radio call signs on MARS networks is not authorized.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 3/09/09 - 3/13/09

Subject: Abbreviated Call Signs

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 7, Section 2.E

E. NCS may authorize the use of abbreviated call signs (delete the NNNØ portion of the call) to expedite the business on the net as per NTP8(D), Paragraph 731.d.

Once authorized, they remain authorized until NCS announces that full call signs must be used. When abbreviated call signs are authorized, their use is optional but highly encouraged in the interest of net efficiency. The NCS and all other stations will use the full call sign of NCS at all times. NCS authorizes the use of abbreviated call signs as follows:

"9A2B, THIS IS NNNØ(NCS) ABBREVIATED CALL SIGNS AUTHORIZED. OUT."

To return to using full call signs the NCS transmits:

"9A2B, THIS IS NNN0(NCS) USE FULL CALL SIGNS. OUT."

(Note that the examples listed in this chapter assume that abbreviated call signs have not been authorized.)

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 3/16/09 - 3/20/09

Subject: Free Nets

Reference: SOP for Calling and Operating a Voice Net
Sect 4, Para C

C. After all traffic, training, and net business has been handled NCS may put the net into Free Net status if Free Net is authorized. Free Net means stations may contact each other directly without prior permission of NCS. 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 transmission to allow for another station to break in.
- (4) NCS may interrupt an exchange at any time and stop the exchange by calling a directed net. No explanation of NCS action in this regard is expected and none need be given.

What is WinLink 2000

Winlink 2000 is a digital network messaging technology that allows radio operators to send e-mail like messages over HF or VHF frequencies to other radio operators, and to virtually every e-mail address available. Winlink 2000 is the name of the network system, but the software that you will use to connect into the system is called Airmail or Paclink.

Airmail acts like an e-mail client such as MS Outlook, Outlook Express or Thunderbird. For the MARS program, Airmail version 3.3.080 or greater should be used. Previous versions are not designed for MARS.

Another client option is Paclink. Paclink installs on your computer and is an interface between the Winlink system as Outlook Express or Thunderbird email clients on your computer. It acts much like an email server on your local computer.

You will hear a variety of terms when using the system. The major unit you will hear of is the RMS (Radio Message Server). The RMS is a computer with special software, and a radio hooked into the Winlink 2000 network. The RMS is the station that you will connect to for sending and receiving messages via HF. MARS RMS's are located, across the CONUS, in Germany and Qatar to date. Some of these RMS's may also have a co-located VHF radio for VHF packet connections. You can use Airmail or Paclink to connect to both.

Using the internet, RMS's connect to any one of several CMS's (Common Message Servers). These redundant, mirror image CMS's are the connection between public e-mail addresses and Winlink e-mail addresses. Without the CMS system, you can't send messages between the internet and Winlink. RMS's can connect to any of the CMS's at anytime.

You can also connect to CMS's via the internet using a Telnet connection. Both Airmail and Paclink have a Telnet feature that allows you to connect to a CMS without a radio.

What do you need to get on Winlink 2000? You'll need a computer with Airmail or Paclink installed. For radio access, a HF or VHF radio, and a supported TNC. If you choose Telnet access only, you will just need an internet connection. The computer doesn't have to be a high performance machine, just something that can run Windows 98 or higher for Airmail, and Windows 2000 or higher for Paclink.

Additional Winlink information can be found at:
<http://www.winlink.org/>

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten Training
Use Date Range: 3/30/09 - 4/03/09

Subject: Radio Checks

Reference: NTP8(D) Chapter 7, Paragraph 711

Standard Voice SOP, Section 7, Paragraph C

A. General: RADIO CHECK, What is my signal strength and readability, i.e., how do you hear me?

"Loud and Clear", I received your last transmission satisfactorily. If reception is other than loud and clear it must be described with the prowords from subparagraphs 711.b and 711.c of the NTP(D).

B. Report of Signal Strength:

LOUD Your signal is very strong.
GOOD Your signal strength is good.
WEAK Your signal strength is weak.
VERY WEAK Your signal strength is very weak.
FADING Your signal strength fades to such an extent that continuous reception cannot be relied upon.

C. Report of readability:

CLEAR Excellent quality.
READABLE Quality is satisfactory.
UNREADABLE The quality of your transmission is so bad that I cannot read you.
DISTORTED Having trouble hearing you because your signal is distorted.
WITH INTERFERENCE Trouble hearing due to interference.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 4/06/09 - 4/10/09

Subject: ECOM Policy

Reference: NTP8(d), Annex D, Paragraph D140

a. It is the policy that MARS communications resources may be employed to support civil defense and civil disaster requirements in the following order of priority (first listed is the top priority):

- (1) Navy and Marine Corps Communications needs regardless of relationship to incident(s).
- (2) Navy and Marine Corps activities within or supporting the affected area.

NOTE: Memoranda of understanding, signed agreements, and other similar documents between MARS and government or civil authorities may interject between priorities anywhere below this point.

- (3) Agencies of the Federal government through the SHARES program.
 - (4) Other Department of Defense and US Coast Guard activities within or supporting the affected area.
 - (5) Agencies of civil government.
 - (6) Disaster relief agencies.
 - (7) Other agencies, organizations, or groups as approved by the MARS region director (or, in his/her absence, designated regional representative).
- b. MARS resources must be requested by an authorized agent of the organization to be supported.
- c. MARS members are not authorized to self activate to the scene of an accident, incident, disaster, or emergency.

ECOM Policy Continued

- d. Individual MARS members shall apprise members of the regional MARS chain of command by the fastest means possible when an emergency or disaster occurs (or is imminent) in order to provide the earliest possible warning and advance information to appropriate authorities.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 4/13/09 - 4/17/09

Subject: Activation of an ECOM Net

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Annex C, Paragraph 11

A. Primary frequency for local ECOM OPS will be the local region/state traffic net frequency.

If there is a traffic net in progress on the frequency, then it should be secured and an ECOM net started in its place.

If there is already an ECOM net on the frequency (from another state or region), then a nearby alternate frequency should be used, advising the other state NCS to direct check-ins to that frequency.

If there is a non-emergency net in progress in another state or region, the NCS of that net should be advised of the emergency and asked to shift the non-emergency net to an alternate frequency.

Upon the activation of any ECOM net, the NCS of the Pacific Area PA1E net should be notified so they can direct members/traffic to the appropriate net/frequency.

It is the responsibility of the region ECOM assistant, or competent authority on the net, to facilitate rotation of NCS as necessary.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 4/20/09 - 4/24/09

Subject: ECOM Net Discipline

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Annex C, Paragraph 12

- A. All emergency nets may be "DIRECTED" or "FREE" at the discretion of the NCS. Abbreviated call signs may be authorized by the NCS.
- B. The station that assumes NCS shall appoint an ANCS. This station shall be ready to assume the duties of NCS at any time, and to assist in the operations of the net by acting as relay, routing traffic, maintaining liaison between frequencies, etc.
- C. Stations not directly involved in net operations shall maintain radio silence after check-in. All monitoring stations should pay attention to net activities, copy along all traffic being passed, and be prepared to assist if required.
- D. All net business will be kept brief. This will allow stations with high priority traffic to check-in without undue delay. NCS may use a "Roll Call" as a way to determine propagation qualities of the frequency.
- E. Large volumes of traffic shall be transmitted on alternate frequencies if at all possible.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 4/27/09 - 5/01/09

Subject: Use of the 3 Common and Alternate Frequencies

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Annex C, Paragraph 17.M

- 1) All frequencies shall be referred to using the Navy Marine-Corps MARS frequency matrix codes with the exception of the three common national ECOM frequencies used as primary frequencies for the PA1E net. The PA1E net has authorized use of NCK, NFN and NMH as alternate frequencies but only for MARS stations. SHARES and other non-MARS stations are not authorized to use these frequencies.

- 2) Use of Navy Marine-Corps MARS call signs is legal only on frequencies under the control of federal agencies. These agencies include: all three MARS services, DOD, any SHARES (3 common only), USCG and USCG Auxiliary, National and State Guard.

Excluded stations are: CAP, Canadian MARS and all amateur stations.

When using amateur frequencies to relay messages, use your FCC amateur call sign. Even though Navy-Marine Corps MARS has no "general prudential rule" which holds that, in the event of an actual emergency involving the loss of life and limb or major property, all necessary communications related to that emergency are legal. The FCC's general prudential rule does apply to Navy-Marine Corps MARS in those times.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten Training
Use Date Range: 5/04/09 - 5/08/09

Subject: Network Operational Controls

Reference: NTP8(D), Chapter 5, Paragraph 502

- a. Net Control Station (NCS) - The net control station (NCS) is a station designated by appropriate authority to direct and control the operation and flow of all traffic on the net. Where practicable, NCS assignments should be rotated among members to take advantage of the significant training value of this key position.
- b. Authority of the NCS extends only to the net operations. Within their scope of authority, decisions of the NCS are final. The NCS does not have jurisdiction over the administration of the individual stations within the net, except for reporting network participation. NCS is charged with the following responsibilities:
 - (1) Expedite traffic on the net
 - (2) Maintain circuit discipline
 - (3) Monitor net operations to determine and initiate corrective action on procedural discrepancies
 - (4) Submit a report of net participation to the designated authority on completion of the net.
- c. Alternate Net Control Station (ANCS): An Alternate Net Control Station (ANCS) shall be designated to assume the duties of NCS when directed or when NCS has failed to answer after three successive calls. When assuming NCS duties, the ANCS will announce NCS assumption (ZKA) by a transmission to NNNØALS. In the event NCS or ANCS are not present, another member of the net should assume the duties of NCS until such time as the NCS or ANCS report into the net.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 5/11/09 - 5/15/09

Subject: Net Chain of Events

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 7, Paragraph 1.C

- 1) The NCS opens the net and ends with the proword OVER.
- 2) If a traffic rep has his/her traffic listing in a digital mode, he/she will notify NCS.
- 3) The NCS recognizes all stations that were heard.
- 4) The NCS again calls the net and receives check-ins, recognizing them as before.
- 5) The NCS may now authorize abbreviated call signs and this is encouraged for net efficiency.
- 6) The NCS now assigns the traffic for which there is little question on who should be taking it by directing it to be passed.
- 7) The NCS asks for check-ins regularly between traffic.
- 8) The NCS lists remaining traffic to solicit takers, matches traffic to takers and directs that it be passed.
- 9) The NCS continues until all traffic is passed that can be. Remaining traffic may be taken by a station for later relay to addressee, sent back to the mailbox, or de-listed by station holding it for delivery by other net or means.
- 10) The remaining net time is devoted to training and then a free net.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten Training
Use Date Range: 5/18/09 - 5/22/09

Subject: Mobile Versus Portable, General Guidelines

These are general guidelines only on determining if you are a mobile or portable station when checking into a net. There are many possible scenarios, so there is no hard rule.

Portable is used when a station is at a temporary but fixed location away from his/her station location of record and not operating at another member's station.

Mobile is when a station is mobile or in a mobile unit, whether moving or parked.

The significant difference is whether NCS can assume the station is staying put, is traveling, or likely will be traveling. As long as a station who is not at "home base" and not operating at another station, has set up a fixed temporary station location they should use "portable".

In all other situations, whether in a vehicle, on a bicycle, or walking, should use mobile to indicate they are or likely will be on/on the move.

As an example, an RV camped for the night is still mobile. An RV parked for the next month at a campground is portable.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 5/25/09 - 5/29/09

Subject: Chain of Command

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 1, Paragraph 3

- A. All communications must follow the "Chain-of-Command" unless otherwise directed by proper authority. Communications, which do not follow the chain-of-command, will contain a statement of authorization to bypass the chain of command.

- B. The chain of command is: member - State Director - Region Director - Area Director. The Area or Region Director, on occasion, may ask members for direct communications; this is done by an announcement in a broadcast. Assistants to the Area Director and Region Directors, while in the performance of their volunteer duties, communicate directly with the Area Director / Region Director.

- C. Communications with Chief, Navy-Marine Corps MARS is via the member's State Director, Region Director and Area Director. Assistants to Chief, Navy-Marine Corps MARS, while in the performance of their volunteer duties, communicate directly with Chief, Navy-Marine Corps MARS.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten Training
Use Date Range: 6/01/09 - 6/05/09

Subject: Specific Duties of the NCS

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 5, Paragraph 4, Sub D

Specific duties of the NCS include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Submission of reports. Each NCS shall make a station participation and frequency usage report. Participation reports are described in detail in Chapter 6.
- 2) Direct and control the operation and flow of all traffic on the net, using procedures outlined in Chapter 7.
- 3) Refer administrative matters to the appropriate staff assistants.
- 4) Exercise strict net discipline at all times.
- 5) Limit all transmissions to the essential minimum while traffic is pending. Ensure that traffic is handled in order of precedence--highest precedence first, lowest precedence last.
- 6) Notify the appropriate Director (state/region/area) via the chain of command of any recommendations for changes and improvements.
- 7) Inform the appropriate Director (state/region/area) of any situation that occurs On-The-Air that caused embarrassment to or is not in the best interests of the Navy-Marine Corps MARS program.
- 8) Assist members having difficulties in obtaining repetitions or relays during the net.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 6/08/09 - 6/12/09

Subject: Net Operating Notes - Part One
Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 7, Paragraph 3.A-G

A. When directing comments or information for all stations on the net, the NCS must call:

*"0X1B, THIS IS NNNØAAA, (state comments or questions),
OVER"*

B. If unable to determine a station's call sign due to interference or because the signal is weak, the proper action is for the NCS to call:

"UNKNOWN STATION, THIS IS NNNØAAA, OVER"

1) If assistance is required, NCS will issue the call:

*"0X1B, THIS IS NNNØAAA, IS THERE A STATION THAT CAN
RELAY? OVER"*

2) Responding stations should reply with ONLY:

"NNNØAAA, THIS IS NNNØBBB, OVER"

C. When a station leaves a net in progress, the station will check out with NCS unless that is impractical due to unforeseen circumstances.

D. Stations requesting to "CLOSE DOWN" from the net at a specific time will do so utilizing ZULU time, and NOT "HALF PAST THE HOUR," "FORTY MINUTES AFTER THE HOUR," etc. All times must be given using the ZULU standard.

Example: *"THIS IS NNNØBBB, REQUEST TO CLOSE DOWN AT
ZERO ONE THREE ZERO ZULU, OVER"*

However, stations may also request to "CLOSE DOWN" immediately with the phrase:

Example: *"THIS IS NNNØBBB, REQUEST TO CLOSE DOWN, OVER"*

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 6/15/09 - 6/19/09

Subject: Net Operating Notes - Part Two

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 7, Paragraph 3.A-G

E. When a station responds with "OVER," that station is considered ready to copy and has communications at least "readable" with the sending station.

Example: *ALPHA BRAVO CHARLIE, THIS IS ECHO TANGO DELTA,
OVER*

If the link is not reliably "readable", the station should add appropriate comment or prowords before the "OVER". Some examples are: "SPEAK SLOWLY, OVER", "WORDS TWICE, OVER", or "WEAK BUT READABLE, OVER." In extreme cases, the receiving station should advise the NCS that a relay will be needed when assigned the message.

F. When a station is ready to list a PRIORITY or IMMEDIATE message, he/she may break-in at any opportune moment, by transmitting the precedence three times such as:

*IMMEDIATE IMMEDIATE IMMEDIATE, (NCS) THIS IS NNNØBBB,
OVER*

The NCS will immediately answer the station, cease all business of lower precedence, and handle the high precedence message.

However, high precedence drill messages may be handled after regular traffic is handled.

G. The general rule is that if there are multiple high precedence messages on the net, NCS will handle all IMMEDIATE messages first in the order that they are listed, then all PRIORITY messages in the order that they are listed until they are handled.

Navy-Marine Corps MARS - Region Ten - Training
Use Date Range: 6/22/09 - 6/26/09

Subject: Net Operating Notes - Part Three

Reference: Pacific Area Operations Guide
Chapter 7, Paragraph 3.H-N

- I. No station, other than the Area/Region/State Director, Deputy Area Director or the Assistant to the Area/Region/State Director for Net Operations/Reports, may question the judgment of a NCS while the net is in progress.
- J. ECOM nets shall, in so far as possible, be conducted exactly as traffic nets as described in this chapter.
- K. Anytime the NCS turns the net over to his/her ANCS, the ANCS becomes the NCS and his/her first action is to appoint an ANCS. The new ANCS can be the regularly assigned NCS.
- L. During the initial call up and response, both call signs will be used by both stations. After this, each member only needs to respond with his/her own call sign when continuing with that exchange. For example, an initial call exchange would be (abbreviated call signs have not been authorized in this example),

NNNØEEE, THIS IS NNNØFFF, OVER

NNNØEEE responds with:

NNNØFFF THIS IS NNNØEEE, OVER

After this initial exchange, each member then only needs to use his/her call sign when continuing with the exchange. NNNØFFF would continue with, *THIS IS NNNØFFF*

- M. Operators will use personal call signs on all nets unless acting in their official capacity, in which case they will use their administrative call signs. Administrative call signs are commonly used on administrative nets and for some appropriate positions, on ECOM nets.