

Region Nine New Member Training Guide

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Table of Contents

Training Philosophy.....	4
Chapter 1. New Member Training.....	5
1.1. A Career In MARS	5
1.2. Introduction.....	6
1.3. NM-ØØ1 Your First Navy-Marine Corps MARS Net	7
1.4. NM-ØØ2 Training Expectations	8
1.5. NM-ØØ3 The Types of Nets	10
1.6. NM-ØØ4 Checking Into Your First Net	11
1.7. NM-ØØ5 Keying and UnKeying Your Microphone	13
1.8. NM-ØØ6 Closing down From a Net	14
1.9. NM-ØØ7 Directed Nets Versus Free Nets	16
Reference Materials.....	16
1.10. NM-ØØ8 Is That Zulu or Local Time?.....	17
1.11. NM-ØØ9 Relating to Net Designators	18
1.12. NM-Ø1Ø Understanding Frequency Designations.....	20
1.13. NM-Ø11 Abbreviated Call Signs.....	20
1.14. NM-Ø12 Radio Checks.....	22
1.16. NM-Ø14 Affirmative, Negative, Correct and Wrong	24
Reference Materials.....	24
1.17. NM-Ø15 Tracking Your Time.....	26
1.18. NM-Ø16 Keeping Good Logs.....	27
Reference Materials.....	27
1.19. NM-Ø17 NCS and ALTNCS	28
1.20. NM-Ø18 Making Your First Call Up	29
1.21. NM-Ø19 Anatomy of a Message.....	30
1.22. NM-Ø2Ø What Takes Precedence?.....	32
1.23. NM-Ø21 DE – Where Did This Message Last Come From?	32
1.24. NM-Ø22 Date-time-group.....	33
1.25. NM-Ø23 3rd Party Addresses	34
1.26. NM-Ø24 Navy-Marine Corps MARS Addresses	35
1.27. NM-Ø25 Action and Info Addresses.....	36
1.28. NM-Ø26 Break and UNCLAS	37
1.29. NM-Ø27 OPNOTES	38
1.30. NM-Ø28 Drill Messages.....	38
1.31. NM-Ø29 Message Composition for Voice versus Digital Delivery	39
1.32. NM-Ø3Ø Your First 3rd Party to 3rd Party Message	40
1.33. NM-Ø31 Listing Your Messages on Check In	41
Reference Materials.....	41
1.34. NM-Ø32 Passing Your First Message by Voice.....	42
Reference Materials.....	42
1.35. NM-Ø33 Say Again – Asking For FILLS.....	45
1.36. NM-Ø34 MARS Organization Chart.....	47
1.37. NM-Ø35 Chain of Command.....	49
1.38. NM-Ø36 Multiple Addresses and Your First Admin Message	50
1.39. NM-Ø37 Listing Traffic With Multiple Addresses.....	52

1.40. NM-Ø38 Relay Instructions.....	54
1.41. NM-Ø39 Your Monthly Off-air Participation Reports.....	55
1.42. NM-Ø4Ø Copying Traffic Assigned To Your Station.....	56
Reference Materials.....	56
1.43. NM-Ø41 Service Messages.....	58
1.44. NM-Ø42 Exercise Messages.....	60
1.45. NM-Ø43 Listing Priority and Immediate Traffic	61
1.46. NM-Ø44 The Navy-Marine Corps MARS Implementation Message	62
1.47. NM-Ø45 The Region Mailbox (RDS MBO).....	64
1.48. NM-Ø46 Traffic Reps	64
1.49. NM-Ø47 Asking For FILLS – Round Two.....	65
1.50. NM-Ø48 The Department of Defense Essential Elements of Information (EEI) Message.....	67
1.51. NM-Ø49 ECOM Reports	69
1.52. NM-Ø5Ø Getting That Fateful Call	70
1.53. NM-Ø51 The Broadcast System	71
Reference Materials.....	71
1.54. NM-Ø52 Acting As Net Control For The First Time.....	73
1.55. NM-Ø53 Assigning NNNØALL Traffic	74
1.56. NM-Ø54 Where Do You Go From Here?.....	75

Training Philosophy

We train like we fight!

Approach your training like you would approach a real incident. The more you practice, the more relaxed you'll be when everything else is accelerating to a frenzied pace.

Chapter 1. New Member Training

1.1. A Career In MARS

[by NNNØASN OR]

Throughout your career in MARS always keep two things in mind:

1. What you practice is what you will do;
2. The safety and well-being of others, as well as the reputation of MARS as a viable service, is in your hands.

What you do and how you do it on day-to-day nets, in training, drills, and exercises is what you will do and how you will do it in an actual situation. Ask yourself, if a member of my family were sick or injured would I be satisfied if the EMTs and doctors functioned with my level of professionalism. Training isn't just a first step in your MARS career, it's a journey that lasts throughout your membership. Training can be a drudgery, kicking and screaming every step of the way, or it can be an adventure, working regularly to improve your skills and be the best MARS operator you can. The view is up to you. Some may even choose to ignore training any time they can. The path you choose will reflect in your performance on the nets. It will be evident to those around you throughout your MARS career. Whether you are seen as a professional, military communicator or not will depend on how serious you are about proper MARS practices, following MARS policies, and good skills development (training). On that note, developing a skill is only part of it. You must keep that skill up to date and in shape. That's why practice sessions are called exercises.

Every day on the nets is practice, whether or not you see it that way at the time. When it comes to an emergency you will behave the same way you regularly do on the nets. Whether that is consistently good practices, or a series of bad habits, is up to you.

I have used the term "career". Yes, MARS membership is a career. "Career" is defined as a calling, a profession, a practice, a specialization. Membership in MARS is certainly all of those things. Of course there is no paycheck attached. Then again, nowhere in the definitions of "career" did I find the mention of money. The only "pay" in MARS is personal satisfaction for a job done right and the idea that you might have helped someone along the way who really needed it.

I will say up front that MARS is not for everyone. That doesn't mean MARS is aloof. Simply put, just as soccer, chess, or reading Shakespeare is not everyone's cup of tea, so MARS is not. There are rules, procedures, and requirements to adhere to, whether we feel like it or not. We simply cannot do whatever we like based on the mood we are in at the moment. Many people work well under a military structure. Some prefer a much more relaxed approach. Those who depend on MARS simply can't afford to have us make mistakes or cause delays because we don't feel like doing it the prescribed way, or have been too lax in our training to be aware of the prescribed way. Notice I didn't say "the right way"; I said the prescribed way.

If we do things by the book it will automatically be right because it will work. Why? Because everyone is doing the same thing in the same way. There will be no surprises, and no confusion on the part of those receiving messages, NCS trying to keep track of their net, or administrators who need to keep things running smoothly. Consistency! That's the key. It's why the military spends a considerable sum every year rotating its members to new duty stations, It's that important. Training is the most significant activity MARS members undertake. Training has been a part of everyday life since birth. Unfortunately, the term is often associated with a one-time concept. Police officers go to the academy for training. Enlisted recruits go to boot camp for training. Workers receive training on their company's new production machine. You took driver's training in high school. It's unfortunate that "training" gets the undeserved reputation of being for beginners only and that once you have it you don't need it again.

Every day that you engage in an activity you learn something (right or wrong). You improve your skills (hopefully). You refresh yourself on what you have learned in the past. Doctors, lawyers, and others know this very well. That is why they call what they do a "practice". Every profession realizes training is not a one time thing. They have in-service and continuing education requirements that must be met on a regular basis. Just as important, they review and assess every single day the things they did, the mistakes they made, and ask themselves how can they do it better.

The first step in MARS training is the Basic Procedures Training program. Beyond that is assessing daily your performance on the nets, taking additional courses such as the NMO series, participating in ECOM exercises, and more. I hope you will consider your training in MARS as not just a means to an end, but an ongoing process that helps you grow every day. Take the time to participate in training. Training is what makes you accurate. No one can be fast (or of any use) until they are first accurate. It's not perfection, but rather dedication to accuracy and correctness that makes each of you a professional. As you use the training aids and participate in the formal and informal training that Navy-Marine Corps MARS offers I hope you will get what you can from it in a positive spirit. Above all, get that "paycheck" of personal satisfaction I talked about earlier. It is also my hope that you will share with your training staff, and through them with me, your input on training in our program.

1.2. Introduction

This new member training course is designed to guide you through your studies and exercises on the way to becoming a full member of Navy-Marine Corps MARS.

All new members are expected to attend these training nets and come prepared to practice the skills they've been reading about during the week. This course is not designed to cover everything outlined in NTP 8(D) and the Pacific Area Ops Guide but as an introduction to these key documents, pointing you to the major areas that you will eventually spend more time on yourselves outside of these classes.

Stations checking into these nets should expect to be called upon to answer questions. This is not meant to single out any particular station but as a learning experience for all and a way for you to determine areas that you may need to spend time refreshing your skills.

1.3. NM-ØØ1 Your First Navy–Marine Corps MARS Net

Welcome to the first of many sessions designed to guide you on your way to becoming a full member of Navy–Marine Corps MARS. For some of you, this could be your first Navy–Marine Corps MARS HF net. There is only one thing to keep in mind on any nets you attend, listen, listen, listen, and pay attention to the instructions from the NCS.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.

You can always tell who the NCS is by listening to the way the net is announced. A typical call up will sound like:

NCS says: 9S1B, 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over.

A station checking in would say:

Trial member says: NNNØNCS, [unkey the microphone and listen for someone else transmitting at the same time] this is NNNØTTTT, no traffic, over.

The suffix of a MARS callsign, following NNNØ, must be spoken phonetically at all times.

(A)lpha	(N)ovember
(B)ravo	(O)scar
(C)harlie	(P)apa
(D)elta	(Q)uebec
(E)cho	(R)omeo
(F)oxtro	(S)ierra
(G)olf	(T)ango
(H)otel	(U)niform
(I)ndia	(V)ictor
(J)uliet	(W)hiskey
(K)ilo	(X)ray
(L)ima – pronounced leemah	(Y)ankee
(M)ike	(Z)ulu

Each section of this training guide is broken down into:

- **Reference Materials.** A list of the material you should familiarize yourself with prior to the training net.
- **Interactive Lesson.** A script you can follow along with while listening to the net.

- **Exercises.** Questions you can expect to be asked on the air. There is no shame in not knowing the answer; it is perfectly acceptable to say that you don't know. It's a good idea to use these questions to guide your study of the training material and try to come to the net with answers ready.

1.4. NM-ØØ2 Training Expectations

Training is an ongoing process but there is a well defined set of objectives for new stations, or trial member stations, to complete on their way to becoming a full member in Navy-Marine Corps MARS.

Stations checking into this net should expect to be called upon to answer questions. This is not meant to single out any particular station but as a learning experience for all and a way for you to determine areas that you may need to spend time refreshing your skills.

Reference Materials (available on Pacific Area Training CD or the below web site(s))

- This training document.
- **NTP 8(D).** www.navymars.org, Documents, NTP 8(D)
- **The Pacific Area Ops Guide.** www.navymars.org, Area, Pacific, Pacific Area Ops Guide
- **MARS Operator Course (MOC).** www.navymars.org, Training, Continue at the bottom of the page, for Staff in General, MARS Operator Course
- **Region Nine Exam.** Received from your State Directors Assistant for Training.

Interactive Lesson

Reference materials that all stations should have on hand are available from the Navy-Marine Corps MARS web site at www.navymars.org.

- The first reference guide is a document called NTP 8(D) that outlines the general procedures and information common to all areas. This document can be found from the home page by clicking on the link to documents on the left hand side.
- The Pacific Area Ops Guide contains details specific to the Pacific area and can be found on the main web site by following the links: Area, and then Pacific.
- Older versions of this tutorial can be found by following the links: Area, Pacific, and then Training from the main web site home page.
- Keep in mind that you will not have access to www.navymars.org as a Trial member station. The Area Director has or will send you a Pacific Area Training CD, along with a letter of welcome, that contains all the training material that you will need and more.

It is a good idea to have hard copies (or the above CD) of NTP 8(D), The Pacific Area Ops Guide, and the Joint MARS Voice SOP for use in the field and for making personal notes while you are studying. Any questions you may have can be brought to the State Director's Assistant

for Training which is NNNØGAF FOUR in Southern California (SCA), to one of these weekly training nets, to an elmer if you were assigned one when you began your training, and to other Navy–Marine Corps MARS members you meet throughout your training.

Only the Pacific Area Director, NNNØASE, can authorize your acceptance as a full member of Navy–Marine Corps MARS. You can reasonably expect him do so upon the recommendation of your Region and State Director which is, in turn, based upon the recommendation of the State Director's Assistant for Training, or NNNØGAF FOUR. It is important to participate on your state nets so that the State Director knows about your progress. Once you have met the requirements outlined in this guide and actively participated in a number of traffic nets, you can expect to hear from NNNØGAF FOUR and/or NNNØGAF, your State Director, about handling a traffic net on your own to complete your training.

It is usually true that both you and the State Director for Training will come to the conclusion, at almost the same time, that you are qualified; it just seems to work out that way. If you have a special background such as having previously been a MARS member or having served as a military communicator, please let the instructor know about it.

In order for you to participate and get the most out of your training, you are expected to:

- Review the week's training materials prior to the training net.
- Have an HF station with the capability to participate. If there are hardware problems, we will note it and lend assistance as best we can but it is your responsibility to have a station capable of working on your state nets.
- Learn our protocols sufficiently to confidently check in and conduct net business. There's no better teacher than personal experience; just getting on the nets and participating will reinforce everything you've read during your studies.
- Learn and use the common PROWORDS including OVER and OUT, ROGER and WILCO, CORRECT and WRONG, AFFIRMATIVE and NEGATIVE, those used in giving RADIO CHECKS, and those used to obtain FILLS in messages.
- Compose, list, and send the following six types of messages using proper relay instructions:
 - A third party message from anyone to anyone else in the US.
 - A multiple address administrative message. Unless you have had previous military experience, these are probably new to you.
 - An off-air participation report.
 - A service message. These messages are typically sent to inquire about previous message traffic.
 - The Navy–Marine Corps MARS Implementation message.
 - A Department of Defense Essential Elements of Information (EEI) message.
- Complete the Mars Operator Course (MOC) material and final exam and forward your answer sheet to the Pacific Area Director's Training Assistant, NNNØASE Four. If you did the Review exam, it should be sent to your State Director for grading.
- Complete the Region Nine final exam.
- Act as a Net Control Station for one traffic net.
- Be familiar with NTP 8(D), the Pacific Area Ops Guide, the website, and the system of broadcasts.

After you receive regular membership, if you have digital capabilities you are not required, but strongly encouraged to:

- Deliver some of your messages digitally using AMTOR and/or PACTOR.
- Take messages to and from an Area Mailbox (ADN MBO) using AMTOR and/or PACTOR.

Each message you will prepare as a trial member adds complexity to the previous message you completed. For this reason, it is best to prepare these messages in the order they are introduced but there is no restriction on completing the delivery of one message on a traffic net before working on the next one in the list. In fact, it is a good idea to get some experience in listing multiple messages on a traffic net. The net control station can always request that you hold one or more of your messages for another net.

Probably one of the more confusing aspects of generating messages is the appropriate addressing for staff positions. This is especially difficult for trial member stations because they do not have access to roster information until after they complete their training. During training, you must rely on the advice and corrections provided by your State Directors Assistant for Training, NNNØGAF FOUR, and/or an assigned elmer.

You will be in a trial member status for a minimum of 90 days.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how many traffic nets do you need to act as a net control station on to complete your training, over.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, is it acceptable for a trial member station to deliver training messages both by voice and digitally, over?

1.5. NM-ØØ3 The Types of Nets

This module will introduce the numerous types of nets that are established under various conditions.

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 5, paragraph 501.
-

Interactive Lesson

All Navy-Marine Corps MARS (NMCM) nets are considered training nets, because in the very least, each net is teaching us basic net practices and procedures. There are a number of different nets that are established under various conditions. We're going to take a quick look at all of the net types but concentrate on the differences between training and traffic nets later on.

Administrative Nets. Administrative nets are designed to provide a forum for staff at a given level to interact with their immediate subordinates and other stations that the discussion would involve.

Traffic Nets. Traffic nets are established primarily to handle traffic although other topics of interest like additional training, assisting other stations with problems, and giving stations an opportunity to test their equipment may be permitted by the net control station, provided the traffic brought to the net has already been dealt with.

Emergency Nets. Emergency (ECOM) nets are established primarily to handle emergency command and control functions and emergency traffic. Emergency nets are also established for the purpose of exercises and drills.

Training Nets. Training nets are established to provide guidance in technical and procedural matters. Additional training may occur during traffic nets should there be any time left over after the traffic has been dealt with. Priority and immediate precedence traffic could appear on a training net and must be handled accordingly. Routine traffic should be held for a regular traffic net.

Specialty Nets. Specialty networks are established for a purpose other than traffic handling or training. A few examples of networks that fall within the specialty network category are: Afloat and Overseas Operations networks, Antarctic Operations networks, and Slow Scan TV Operations networks. Specialty networks are only established under the awareness and authorization of Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS. Authorization to participate must be obtained from the respective specialty network coordinator via your state and area directors.

Command Nets. Command networks are primarily established for coordination purposes among Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS, Headquarters MARS radio station also known as NAV, MARS directors and any other stations specifically authorized.

Tactical Nets. Tactical networks are established to meet the requirements for emergency point to point operations among stations specifically authorized in an ECOM plan. The use of tactical call signs, if desired or necessary, must be approved by Chief Navy-Marine Corps MARS.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, is it appropriate to deliver non–drill traffic on a training net, over?

1.6. NM–ØØ4 Checking Into Your First Net

How do you let net control know you're out there?

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - Pacific Area Ops Guide, chapter 7.
-

Interactive Lesson

When a net is initially opened, multiple call ups are made to get as many stations checked in as possible before assigning traffic.

With the new Joint Voice Net Standard Operating Procedure in effect, stations may respond to all call ups, including the first call up, without regard to their net staff position or held traffic status. When checking in, stations will list any held traffic or state “no traffic.” If a station has been assigned “guard” duty for a staff position or another station, he will so state when checking in. Declaring guard status for a staff position held by the station checking in will not be necessary or allowed, simply because all hands must make it their business to know who the leadership of the organizations is.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Alternate Net Control (ANCS) is NNNØANC and has no traffic for the net.
- Traffic Rep is NNNØTRA who holds a list of traffic for this net.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and has no traffic for this net.

The start of this net would sound like:

NCS says... 9S1B, 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over.

Remember that any station may check in at this time regardless of position in the staffing of the net or members having or not having traffic.

ANCS says... NNNØNCS, [unkey the microphone and listen for someone else transmitting at the same time] this is NNNØANC, no traffic, over.

Traffic Rep says... NNNØNCS, [unkey the microphone and listen for someone else transmitting at the same time] this is NNNØTRA, I have a traffic list, over.

NCS says... NNNØANC, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out. NNNØTRA, this is NNNØNCS, list your traffic, over.

The traffic rep will list the traffic that is being brought to the net. This may include new and old traffic but we won't worry about the distinction between new and old traffic until a later date.

Once the traffic has been listed, the NCS will read the traffic list to all stations and start another call up to look for other stations waiting to check in and to potentially speak up for traffic that has already been listed.

NCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over.

Our trial member station keys the microphone a little faster than everyone else.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, [unkey the microphone and listen for someone else transmitting at the same time] this is NNNØTTTT, no traffic, over.

The NCS will acknowledge all stations heard, in the order that they checked in, with something that sounds like one of the following:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, NNN0AAA, NNN0BBB, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

or

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, NNNØTOST, NNNØTART, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

All operators are expected to use both call signs to establish communications between the two stations. After the initial contact is established, stations are allowed and encouraged to use just their own call sign in response to another station that ended their last exchange with the proword over. On initial check ins, you may hear the NCS list a number of call signs before announcing their own callsign but both the acknowledged station and the net control station call signs appear in the initial exchange.

Let's take a look at a sample exchange where a station requests information about another training net:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, when is the 9S2C training net held, over?

NNNØNCS says... This is NNNØNCS, the 9S2C net is held on Thursdays at Ø3ØØZ,

out.

NOTE: With the new Joint Voice Net Standard Operating Procedures, the use of call signs at the beginning of each transmission after initial contact is optional. However, both stations must identify their station when terminating the conversation. "This is NNNØTTTT. Nothing further. Over." This is NNNØNCS. Out."

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should you check into a net on the first call when you don't hold any traffic, over? (Answer: You may.)

1.7. NM-ØØ5 Keying and UnKeying Your Microphone

Exercising common sense when communicating on HF frequencies.

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - **Pacific Area Training Guide, Chapter 7.**
-

Interactive Lesson

Unlike using repeaters, there is no courtesy tone to listen for to indicate when it is safe for the next person to speak. Numerous people could transmit at the same time, however the more people transmitting, the less coherent the content becomes. This may sound painfully obvious but it's very easy to forget.

During the check in process, and other times when initial calls are being made to establish conversations, stations are expected to unkey their microphones before saying, "...this is" and their call sign. At all times during a net, you need to listen before you key your microphone to make sure you won't be transmitting at the same time as another station.

Let's take a look at a typical net check in without traffic.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS and has just made a third call up.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and has no traffic for this net.

A trial member station checking in with no traffic would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, [unkey the microphone and listen for someone else trasmitting at the same time] this is NNNØTTTT, no traffic, over.

If you hear someone else transmitting at the same time you are, stop transmitting and wait for another quiet period to attempt checking in again. Use the same exact procedure as above on the second and subsequent attempts.

Exercises

Practice, practice, practice on the air.

1.8. NM-ØØ6 Closing Down From a Net

Sometimes you just have to leave, or close down from, the net before it is officially closed. Always make sure you request permission from net control before you leave.

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - Pacific Area Ops Guide, Chapter 7.
-

Interactive Lesson

If you know ahead of time that you need to close down before the end of the net, you should make that request when you check in. This is typically done right after you indicate whether or not you hold traffic for the net. Your request should indicate the time you wish to close down and not a relative time from the moment you made the request.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS and has just made a up.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and has no traffic for this net.

A trial member station checking in with a request to close down 20 minutes into the net (the net started at 0000Z) would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, no traffic, request close down at ØØ2Ø Zulu, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, roger, close down at ØØ2Ø Zulu, out.

You must be on the net for a minimum of 15 minutes if you wish to get credit for attending the net. When you request to close down early, you should take this minimum time frame into account and not request to close down prior to 15 minutes past the hour if you want participation credit.

There will be occasions when you need to close down in short order. You should always contact the NCS to request permission before leaving the net. The exchange in a request for permission to close down immediately would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, request close down, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, close down, out.

If you decide at a later time that you want to get back on the net, you must check in again just the same as you would if you had never been on the net.

A net must be open for a minimum of 30 minutes and typically a maximum of 60 minutes; schedules and broadcasts will define the maximum allotted time for any net. A net may be closed down after the first half hour once all of the traffic brought to the net has been handled or the net has used up all of its allotted time. Once the net has been closed down, members of the net must

stop transmitting on that frequency if the intention is to talk to stations that were part of the net. It is not acceptable to call net control after the net has closed to attempt to check in. What is acceptable is to tune and test as long as your actions do not interfere with other stations on that frequency.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, assuming net control is NNNØNCS, tell me how NNNØTTTT would request to close down at ØØ25Z when checking in, over.

1.9. NM-ØØ7 Directed Nets Versus Free Nets

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 5, paragraph 503.
-

Interactive Lesson

Nets can be operated in one of two modes: directed or free. The directed portion of the net is designed to check stations into a net and to handle any traffic brought to the net. During the directed portion of a net, stations must always contact the NCS before contacting any other stations or closing down from the net.

If time allows, the NCS can make the net a free net which relaxes the requirement to contact net control before contacting another station but does not remove the responsibility of contacting the NCS before closing down from the net.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and has no traffic for this net.

If the NCS wants to turn the net into a free net, the call would sound like:

NNNØNCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, this is a free net, out.

Notice that the announcement ended in out and not over. This is done because the NCS is not expecting any response to the instructions.

Stations are still allowed to check in during a free net. If you are unsure of the NCS call sign, you could check into the net as follows:

NNNØTTTT says... Net control, this is NNNØTTTT, no traffic, over.

At any time during a free net, all the NCS has to say is "9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over." and the net has been returned to a directed net status. Those five words are enough to make the net directed again. If the NCS addresses the net and ends the transmission with OVER or OUT, you must wait for the net to be declared free again or contact net control (only on a call up) to ask for permission to talk to another station directly.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, are you permitted to check into a traffic net, without traffic, any time after the second call up, over?

1.10. NM-ØØ8 Is That Zulu or Local Time?

To avoid confusion among stations from different time zones, one common time zone is used for all traffic and net announcements.

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

It's easy to become confused when you start thinking in terms of more than one time zone. Picking up a telephone and dialing a long distance number is a reminder to ourselves that we are talking to someone a long ways away. On HF frequencies, we sometimes forget that it's more like a party line phone call than a person to person call and the people that can hear what we're saying can be miles and miles away. So, when you talk about times and dates, referring to a local time or date would be meaningless to most people unless you also specified which time zone you're talking about.

An added complication is the fact that not all places observe daylight savings. Arizona and Hawaii are examples of places that do not adjust their clocks one hour ahead in the spring and back one hour in the fall.

There is a simple solution to this confusing mess of time zones: zulu time. You may be familiar with a few of the other terms used to refer to zulu time:

- Coordinated Universal Time.
- UTC – a short hand for Coordinated Universal Time.
- Greenwich Mean Time – which was replaced by UTC.
- GMT – a short hand for Greenwich Mean Time.

- To get a better idea of what the various time zones are and the list of time zones that observe daylight savings versus those that do not, visit www.worldtime.org or do a search with your favorite search engine for time zones, world time, world clock, zulu time, or any of the other terms we've already mentioned to find a large number of resources you can visit.

If you stop and think for a second about zulu time versus local time, you'll begin to see how much easier it is to coordinate with other people when you only have to mention one time for an event. It is generally easier for everyone to know how to convert from zulu time to their local time than from your local time to their local time. Zulu time never observes daylight savings so you only have to know the daylight savings rules for your local area.

How does this affect you as a member of MARS? All messages that are sent are expected to use zulu time, in the date-time-group (DTG), rather than local time for the same reasons already mentioned; you don't know what time zone someone is going to be in when they read a request for assistance or a notification of an actual incident. All month-end reports should also be written with references to zulu time. After all, month-end reports are just another message that we handle on traffic nets.

Considering what we just covered, do you know what day it is at this moment?

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can you tell me the day and time that this 9S1C net starts every week, over?

1.11. NM-ØØ9 Relating to Net Designators

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), Annex A, section A500.

Interactive Lesson

Each net is identified by a unique alphanumeric sequence of (Number or Letter) (Letter) (Number) (Letter).

The first character of a net designator identifies the MARS Area or Region where that net is located.

- Regions are referred to by the numbers zero through nine. (0 – 9)
- Areas are identified by a letter:
 - (C)harlie. Central Area
 - (N)ovember. North East Area
 - (P)apa. Pacific Area

- (S)ierra. South Area
- Nets under the authority of Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS begin with the letter (U)niform.

The 9 in 9S1B refers to region nine.

The second character identifies the state with the following exceptions:

- **(A)lpha.** Identifies an area net.
- **(X)ray.** Identifies a region net.
- **(Z)ulu.** Identifies a national level net under the control of Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS.

The S in 9S1B refers to Southern California.

The third character identifies the instance number for this particular type of net identified by the last character in the designator. Instances are generally simultaneous instances so it is not uncommon to have periodic net designators that repeat at various times throughout the year. ECOM nets are a good example of this. If you have a 9S1E net started for an incident that lasts a week, if another incident occurs a month later, you will have another 9S1E net started for that incident.

The 1 in 9S1B refers to the first traffic net for this region and state.

The fourth and final character identifies the type of net as follows:

- **(A)lpha.** Administrative
- **(B)ravo.** Traffic
- **(C)harlie.** Training
- **(E)cho.** ECOM
- **(V)ictor.** Radio–Telephone
- **(W)hiskey.** Radio–Teletype
- **(X)ray.** Slow–Scan TV
- **(Y)anke.** Single Channel Data (SCD). Single channel data includes baudot, ASCII, Packet, AMTOR, ARQ (FEC), Pactor, Clover, and other digital modes as directed.
- **(Z)ulu.** Other

Let's take a look at a few examples:

- **9S1B.** Region 9, SCA (Southern California), 1st, traffic net.
- **9S1C.** Region 9, SCA (Southern California), 1st, training net.
- **9A1Z.** NNN0DIL ART training and coordination net in Arizona.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can you tell me what the net designator 9S1E stands for, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can you tell me what the net designator PA1E stands for, over?

1.12. NM-Ø1Ø Understanding Frequency Designations

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

Exact frequencies are never announced over the air for the purpose frequency and net security. Nets can always be found by scanning around the band but when a net moves to a frequency identified by three letters, there's no indication of where that particular net is moving to; the new location may be elsewhere on that band or another band entirely.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- New frequency is identified by NCC.

At any time during a net, the NCS may decide that an alternate frequency would be easier for conducting the business of the net. An announcement to move the current net would sound like:

NCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, shift to NCC, 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, shift NCC, out.

We will cover the moving of a net in more detail at a later date. The key point is that frequencies are always identified by their three letter designator and never by the actual dial or assigned frequency over the air.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, prior to completing your trial member training, how do you find out the frequency designators you need in order to participate in the nets, over?

1.13. NM-Ø11 Abbreviated Call Signs

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 7, paragraphs 731 and 732.

- Pacific Area Ops Guide, chapter 7.

Interactive Lesson

Lets take another look how stations call other stations on a net. When a net becomes busy, the NCS could authorize abbreviated call signs. An abbreviated call sign is part of the call sign following the zero.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.

An announcement to authorize abbreviated call signs would sound like:

NCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, abbreviated call signs are authorized, out.

Regardless of whether or not abbreviated call signs are authorized during the directed portion of a net:

- The NCS must always be called using a full call sign instead of an abbreviated one.
- Full call signs must always be used during the free portion of a net.

If two stations are involved in the passing of a message and abbreviated call signs have been authorized, the end of the exchange might sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... This is TTTT, say again, exercise to afternoon, over.

NNNØTOST says... This is TOST, I say again, exercise to afternoon, exercise is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is TTTT, roger, out.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, after abbreviate calls signs have been authorized and the net has been declared a free net, how would you contact the net control station with a call sign of NNNØNCS, over?

1.14. NM-Ø12 Radio Checks

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 7, paragraphs 711 and 712.
-

Interactive Lesson

Stations should always assume that their signal is loud and clear unless they hear otherwise.

The expected phrase for signal strength is one of:

- **LOUD.** Your signal strength 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.

The expected phrase for readability is one of:

- **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.

Radio checks may be specifically requested. For example:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, radio check, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, weak readable, out.

You can also notify the NCS of their signal strength when you check in. Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.

NNNØNCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over.

NNNØTTTT says NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, weak distorted, no traffic, , over.

Informing the NCS that they are not loud and clear helps to indicate to NCS that other stations may have better success checking stations into the net. Whenever you check into a net, you should expect net control to potentially ask you to make a call up. Trial member stations are not

generally asked to perform this task until they've attended a few nets and the NCS feels that you understand how call ups are made.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you respond to a radio check request from NNNØNCS when he is very hard to hear and almost impossible to understand, over?

1.15. NM-Ø13 Roger, Wilco, Over and Out

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

The key to improving the performance of a traffic net, or any net, is to always stick to common phrases when speaking with other stations. It is important to remember that the NCS station, has the ultimate authority, control and responsibility for the net. When you are instructed to perform a task by the NCS, you should carry out that task to the best of your ability but inform the NCS if you are unable to accept or complete the task for any reason.

It is important to always listen to the last word from the NCS before deciding how you will respond to a request. When the NCS ends a request or instruction with the proword OVER, stations are expected to respond to the NCS before taking action. If, however, the NCS ends the request with OUT, the station receiving the request should immediately perform the task requested of their station without responding to the net control station.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.

If net control asks you to make a call up, that request will end with the proword OUT. For example:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, make a call up, out.

NNNØTTTT says... 9S1B, this is NNNØTTTT over. Note: Make the call at least twice.

Sometimes the nets will sound rude to someone that has not listened to a number of MARS nets. The intention is not to make people feel uncomfortable or to act like you're wielding power over other stations on the net; the intention is to keep communications as short and efficient as

possible. The less time we spend exchanging unnecessary polite remarks over the air, the more time we can spend attending to the business of the net.

Perhaps the most used and most misused proword is ROGER. ROGER means, "I have received your last transmission satisfactorily". If the last transmission were a formal message, it means that I have copied the message perfectly; my copy is exactly like your copy and I can relay it to anyone else without a single flaw.

Roger does not mean:

- Yes, OK, or Affirmative.
- That I fully understand the content of your message.
- That I will follow any instructions contained in the body of the message.

The next closest proword to ROGER is WILCO. WILCO is used when you are asked to perform some task, you understand the request, and you will do it. ROGER and WILCO are never used together in a response.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.
- Trial member station is NNNØTOST.
- Alternate frequency is NCC.

Net control may ask a station, or stations, to go to another frequency and check out the conditions prior to moving the net there.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, call NNNØTOST, go to NCC to check conditions and report back, over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, wilco, out.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you respond to NNNØNCS if you were asked to make a call up and the request ended in the proword over, over?

1.16. NM-Ø14 Affirmative, Negative, Correct and Wrong

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

The words AFFIRMATIVE and NEGATIVE, as it turns out, are not official prowords. They mean YES and NO. On HF frequencies, single syllable words can easily be wiped out by intermittent noise. Multiple syllable words like affirmative and negative are more likely to be understood, even under the worst conditions.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.
- Trial member station is NNNØTOST.
- A free net has been announced.

For example, NNNØTOST answers a question indicated, "Yes, I'm available":

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØTOST, this is NNNØTTTT, will you be available for tests of my new TNC after the net, over?

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, affirmative, out.

There are a couple of prowords that are used in place of yes and no in a special case. When fills are being requested for a message, CORRECT and WRONG are used to indicate whether or not the previous statement is true or false. We'll take a quick look at two short examples but leave the details of asking for fills for another net.

Here is an example where the statement is wrong.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØTOST, this is NNNØTTTT, is this correct, word after division is four, over?

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, wrong, I say again, word after division is five, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, roger, out.

Here is an example where the statement is correct.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØTOST, this is NNNØTTTT, is this correct, word after division is five, over?

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, correct, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, roger, out.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, assuming you have a linear amplifier and NNNØNCS asks you whether or you have one, what would be the appropriate response, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, are you equipped for digital traffic, over?

1.17. NM-Ø15 Tracking Your Time

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 3, paragraph 323.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, Chapter 6.

Interactive Lesson

Each member must attain 18 hours of participation per quarter. This participation may be split between on-air and off-air activities. The Pacific Area Ops Guide gives an outline of the types of activities that fall under on-air and off-air participation. Some examples of off-air participation include:

- Studying NTP 8(D).
- Studying the Pacific Area Ops Guide.
- Studying ECOM training materials.
- Studying any other MARS or Amateur Radio related training material.
- Studying material from the national web site.
- Working on communications equipment.
- Operating on Army and Air Force MARS nets.
- Telephone conversations with other MARS members assisting with your training.

If you are doing something that is related to improving your performance as a Navy-Marine Corps MARS operator, aside from checking into a net which will be tracked and reported by the NCS of the net, you should record that activity as off-air participation time.

A maximum of 6 hours of off-air participation per quarter will count towards your 18 hour minimum participation requirement. Even though the minimum is so low, you should keep track of every hour you devote to Navy-Marine Corps MARS.

Although 12 hours of net participation in one month, plus 6 hours of off-the-air time in the same month, would give you your minimum quarterly participation in only one month, everyone is encouraged to participate on an on-going basis from month to month in order to keep their skills sharp.

It is imperative that each and every station track their hours of participation as these numbers are directly referred to in the preparation of annual budgets and justifications for our funding by the Navy. That being said, you really only need to track your off-air hours because your on-air hours, in Region Nine, are going to be reported by the NCS of the nets you check into. But, just like any other journal, it's helpful to be able to look back in your own records and be able to tell whether or not you attended certain nets. Your logs can also remind you of nets that you attended in the past but may have forgotten about recently.

Lastly, recorded participation time becomes important when you start training and applying for Navy MARS Operator (NMO) ratings. A certain minimum number of hours of participation are required for each rating.

The number of hours you track and record should be rounded to the next highest whole number. For example, if you spent 25 hours and 45 minutes, throughout the month, studying and working on portable antennas, you would report 26 hours for your off-air participation. If you only spent 25 hours and 5 minutes, you would still report 26 hours for the time you invested. Each major task should be tracked and rounded to the nearest hour individually.

At the end of each month, all members are expected to report their off-air participation with an off-air participation report. We will discuss the details of this report at a later date. For now, you should just be concerned about tracking the hours you will be expected to report at the end of the month.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the maximum number of off-air hours per quarter that may be credited towards your 18 hour minimum quarterly participation, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the maximum number of on-air hours per quarter that may be credited towards your 18 hour minimum quarterly participation, over? (Answer: There is no limit to reportable on-air participation)

1.18. NM-Ø16 Keeping Good Logs

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 5, paragraphs 570 and 571.

Interactive Lesson

Each station is required keep a record of every message that they receive or send. When you send a message to another station you should also add an OPNOTE to the bottom of your copy of the message to enable you to accurately respond to service requests inquiring about the message at a later date. Inquiries may be started for non-delivery or delayed delivery and it is important for each station to be able to identify when they received their copy of the message and when they handed that message over to another station. In this way, any problems that occur can lead to improvements in traffic handling in the future. Without this paper trail, problems could continue for quite some time before being corrected.

The length of time you should keep a log of the messages passing through your station varies based on the type of message:

- Messages related to distress or disaster should be kept on file for three years.
- Messages involved in any claim or complaint for which the station has been notified should be kept for a minimum of two years or until the claim or complaint has been fully rectified, whichever comes last.
- Messages of historical or continuing interest should be kept on file permanently. When you no longer need to keep a copy on hand for personal reference, a copy must be forwarded to Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS.
- General messages should be kept on hand until they are superceded or canceled.
- Broadcasts are kept until cancelled by the originating authority.
- All other messages should be kept for a minimum of sixty days.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, assuming you were asked to pass a message you brought to a traffic net to another station and that message was passed successfully, what should you record in an OPNOTE on your local copy of that message, over?

1.19. NM–Ø17 NCS and ANCS

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 5, paragraph 502.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, chapter 5.

Interactive Lesson

A NCS is a station that has been given the responsibility to direct and control the operation of a net. The authority of a NCS extends only as far as the net they've been assigned to. Specific duties of the NCS are, but are not limited to:

- Submission of monthly participation and frequency usage reports.
- Directing and controlling the operation and flow of all traffic on the net.
- Referring administrative matters to the appropriate staff assistants.
- Maintaining strict net discipline at all times.
- Limiting all transmissions to the essential minimum when traffic is pending.
- Notifying the appropriate Director at the state, region, or area level via the chain of command of any recommendations for changes and improvements.
- Informing the appropriate Director at the state, region, or area level via the chain of command of any incident that occurs on the air that causes embarrassment to or is not in the best interest of the Navy–Marine Corps MARS program.

- Assisting members having difficulties in obtaining repetitions or relays during the net.

The decisions of a NCS, during a net for which they have responsibility, are final and should never be disputed over the air. A NCS may ask a station that is disputing their authority to close down and take matters up with the appropriate Director at a later date and time.

The alternate net control station (ANCS), shares the same responsibilities as the NCS for a net.

The ANCS should be ready and available to assume the duties of net control at any time upon request or should the NCS fail to respond to three successive calls. When assuming net control, the ANCS will make an announcement to all stations. Assign an ANCS and do a roll call of all stations that he believes to be on the net.

In the event that the NCS and ANCS are not present, another member of the net should assume the duties of net control until the NCS or ANCS report in. Any check ins must be relayed to the NCS or ANCS when net control duties are passed back. Regardless of who runs the net, the assigned NCS is responsible for filing the month-end reports. Each station who performed NCS duties on the net must pass that info to the assigned NCS so that he can include that information in his month-end report.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can the NCS turn control of the net over to another station, over?

1.20. NM-Ø18 Making Your First Call Up

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

You should expect to be called upon at any time to make a call up.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Alternate Net Control (ANCS) is NNNØANC.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.

The NCS will request a station to make a call up by saying something like:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, make a call up, out.

If that station doesn't hear the request or doesn't make the call up, the NCS may assign that task to another station or make the call themselves.

Regardless of who makes the call up, check in procedures remain the same. Any check ins acknowledged by a station other than the NCS should be relayed to the NCS along with any traffic those stations hold and after making several call ups until no more stations can be heard. You are being asked to make call ups to check in stations that may only be able to hear your station so you should make every effort to check in every station you can hear.

Let's take a look at how our trial member station would handle a request to make a call up.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, make a call up, out.

NNNØTTTT says... 9S1B, this is NNNØTTTT, over.

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, no traffic, over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØTOST, this is NNNØTTTT, roger, out.

NNNØTTTT says... 9S1B, this is NNNØTTTT, Over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, NNNØTOST checked in no traffic, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can anyone that checked into a net be asked to make a call up, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you make a call up for the 9S1B net, over?

1.21. NM-Ø19 Anatomy of a Message

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 6.

Interactive Lesson

Before you can begin to understand how to direct traffic, deliver traffic, or accept traffic, you should become familiar with the composition of messages and the variety of content they contain.

In a general sense, messages are composed of two parts, the header and the body. The header contains information that is identified by a set of prowords for the key items involved in the addressing of a message from one place to another. The body of the message is much less structured and depends on the type of message being sent. There are expectations on the content and layout of a message based on its intent but there are no hard and fast rules for all message bodies. A break, written as BT, is used to identify the end of each section, however, when you request portions of the message to be read back to you after the initial delivery, you should treat the second break at the end of the body of the message as though it does not exist. Any reference to break in a request for a fill refers to the break between the header and the body of the message.

A quick list of the items you may encounter in the header of a message are:

- The prosign DE, the call sign of the station holding the current message and, for digitally formatted messages, a serial number.
- The precedence of the message. (R Routine, P Priority, O Immediate)
- The Date-Time-Group, often abbreviated in the manuals as DTG.
- The originator of the message identified by FM.
- The action addresses identified by TO.
- The informational addresses identified by INFO.
- The exempt addresses identified by XMT. (used only when collective call signs appear in the header.)

If we take a closer look at the contents of the header, we will find that a date-time-group, a from address, and to address will be a part of all messages. Info lines are optional and used to add destinations to a message that don't need to take any action based on the content of the message.

At the present time, the first word of all NMCM messages is UNCLAS which stands for the security classification of UNCLASSIFIED. You may never see a classification of a message text higher than unclassified. The text of NMCM messages may not exceed 50 words including the unclas.

The only differences between a message formatted for voice versus digital delivery is the additional information needed by the digital mailboxes. If you have formatted a message for digital delivery but are forced to deliver that message by voice, you will learn what to ignore when you deliver your messages by voice at a later date. Digital formatting just involves additions so they are easy enough to skip over during delivery by voice. Initially, all new members will format their messages for delivery by voice.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, do all messages have a date-time-group, over?

1.22. NM-Ø2Ø What Takes Precedence?

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 631.
-

Interactive Lesson

The levels of precedence in order of increasing importance are:

- Routine (abbreviated by the letter (R)omeo)
- Priority (abbreviated by the letter (P)apa)
- Immediate (abbreviated by the letter (O)scar referring to Operational Immediate. The term operational was dropped some time ago but the abbreviation remains the same.)
- Flash (abbreviated by the letter (Z)ulu) is used for initial sightings of the enemy and is not expected to appear very often on MARS traffic nets.

The majority of your training messages will be assigned a (R)outine precedence with the exception of an Implementation message and an Essential Elements of Information or EEI message which will be both be delivered as (O)Immediate.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the abbreviation for immediate precedence, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the abbreviation for priority precedence, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the abbreviation for routine precedence, over?

1.23. NM-Ø21 DE – Where Did This Message Last Come From?

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.
-

Interactive Lesson

As a trial member, or new member, you will prepare all your messages as though they will be delivered by voice. Those members who have digital capabilities may modify one or more of their training messages to also be delivered digitally for review by the Training Director, but they must still be delivered by voice until regular membership is achieved. It is not too hard to remember which items to ignore while delivering the message, it just takes practice.

The first line of a digitally formatted message contains either the call sign of the station who first entered the message into the MARS Data System (MDS) or the call sign of the member that last handled the message followed by a serial number. Some members restart their serial numbers monthly or annually and others never do. This line of information is ignored during delivery by voice.

Let's take a look at an example:

```
DE NNNØXXX 138
```

NNNØXXX. The call sign of the station that is delivering this message to the next operator.

138 is the serial number for this message. Serial numbers must have three digits, and start from ØØ1. Some operators start from ØØ1 at the beginning of each month and others only start from ØØ1 at the beginning of each year. Others still, never restart their serial numbers.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should all messages you prepare contain a DE line, over?

1.24. NM-Ø22 Date-time-group

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.
-

Interactive Lesson

The date-time-group (DTG) is expressed has six digits and a time zone suffix, followed by a three character abbreviation of the month and the four digit of the year.

The first six digits are broken down as DDHHMM (Day Day Hour Hour Minute Minute). Single digit days have a leading zero.

All date-time-groups in MARS are in zulu. Therefore, the seventh character of a date-time-group should always be the letter (Z)ulu.

As an example, Sunday, September 5, 2004 at 2132Z would be represented as 052132Z SEP 2004.

When you pass messages by voice, the date-time-group immediately follows the precedence of the message but does not required you to spell out the letters in the way I did just a few seconds ago. The format of the date-time-group is understood by all operators and therefore you don't need to spell out the time zone or month. There is an exception to this that I will mention soon.

If a routine message I am delivering to you by voice has the same date and time, Sunday, September 5, 2004 2132Z, you would expect to hear the following at the beginning of a message being delivered by NNNØTTTT by voice.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, message follows, routine time zero five two one three two zulu september two zero zero four. You would write that R 052132Z SEP 2004.

Now the exception to the rule: When a date-time-group appears in the body of a message you would hear:

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, routine, I spell, romeo, figures zero five two one three two zulu I spell, sierra echo papa, figures, two zero zero four.

The use of the prowords Figures and I spell are determined by the first character in the group of characters being spoken. The first character after the precedence Routine (Romeo) is the figure zero thus you say figures zero. Etc. The first character of the group SEP is a letter, so you say I spell. Sep cannot be pronounced in such a manner to make the receiving station understand that it is SEP, so you spell it out phonetically.

In the body of a message you should never assume that the date-time-group is properly formatted. You always want to make sure you have an exact copy of the message being sent to you.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can you tell me how you would read the current date and time as it would appear in the header of a routine message, over?

1.25. NM-Ø23 3rd Party Addresses

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.
-

Interactive Lesson

A third party address is similar to addressing an envelope for a USPS delivery. You want to provide the full details on the street address as well as contact phone number and email address (all on the same line) if available.

When you deliver an address by voice, you never mention the carriage returns between the lines but you do want to spell out anything that is not intuitive. A good example would be spelling out last names, cities, and street names.

As you may have noticed already, we use the phrase I SPELL when we want to spell something out. The phrase I SPELL is used to clarify the spelling of words or abbreviations that may not be obvious. You begin by saying the word or phrase, follow that by saying I SPELL and spell out the word or phrase phonetically, and finally say the word or phrase again as an indication that you've completed spelling it out. If you cannot pronounce the word, then just spell it phonetically.

When you hear a message being listed on the net with a 3rd party address, you will often hear figures being mentioned in the listing. These figures are often the area code and prefix of the telephone number when available. It's just another means of giving the NCS a hint about how to assign this traffic. If the NCS knows a station on the net is in the same area code, that traffic will likely be assigned to them.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how much detail should you include in the from address for a 3rd party message, over?

1.26. NM-Ø24 Navy-Marine Corps MARS Addresses

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.
-

Interactive Lesson

In general, most messages will have a Navy–Marine Corps MARS call sign in the from address. When this is combined with full address details, the name of the sending party and the call sign with state will appear on the first line in the from address, separated by a slant.

For example, a from address in a 3rd party message generated by NNNØTOST would read:

```
FM JESSICA SIMMONS OCEANSIDE CA/NNNØTOST SCA
```

It is also possible that messages generated by Navy–Marine Corps MARS operators will contain just a name, call sign, and state or just a call sign and state in the from address. In fact, messages between two Navy–Marine Corps MARS operators only require the call sign and state.

For example, a message from NNNØTTTT to NNNØGAF FOUR would have a from and to address as follows:

```
FM NNNØTTTT SCA  
TO NNNØGAF FOUR SCA
```

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should the state always appear next to a call sign in a message, over?

1.27. NM–Ø25 Action and Info Addresses

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.

Interactive Lesson

Action addresses are added to a message for people that need to be aware of the content of a message and might need to take some action based on that content.

Info addresses are for people that you just want to have a copy of the message but you do not expect them to take any action based on that content.

All messages need to have at least one action address. An action address is listed in the TO section of the header. Info addresses are generally determined by protocol because they are generally informational copies sent to supervisors or subordinates as what is called courtesy

copies. On some messages (usually pro-forma messages like ECOM messages and administrative messages) the info address is mandatory.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, is there a limit to the number of addresses you can list for a message, over?

1.28. NM-Ø26 Break and UNCLAS

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

There are two breaks in a correctly formatted message. The first break appears between the header and the body of the message. The second break appears at the end the text or body of the message.

The first break is generally used as an anchor point when requesting fills for parts of the message you may have missed. We will go into more details on requesting fills at a later date. For now, just remember that the first break is the only break you should hear someone refer to after the initial delivery of the message has been completed.

The first item of a message that always follows the first break is a line with the proword UNCLAS. We'll look into this more later. For now, this just indicates that the message contains unclassified content.

The second break indicates the end of the body of the message. The only things you should hear after the second break is a call to the stations receiving the message to confirm whether or not they have a perfect copy or an OPNOTE that may appear in drill messages. We'll go into more details on drill messages in a few moments.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how many breaks do you expect to hear in a message being delivered by voice, over?

1.29. NM-Ø27 OPNOTES

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

OPNOTES are considered operator to operator instructions or, some times additional useful information. Army used to, and may still, put the complete address of the originator of a 3rd-party addressee in an OPNOTE. Other address information that could not/would not fit in the header might be places there. The OPNOTES may be used for many things besides those indicated below.

OPNOTES that you hear on the air are generally added for drill messages to notify the other station not to forward a message that is used for educational messages.

Other OPNOTES could include the information you record indicating the date, time, net designator, and call sign of the person you forwarded a message to. This kind of OPSNOTE would be only for your use in your station and not be transmitted to the station receiving the traffic/message.

OPNOTES appear after the second break.

In a drill message, like the six messages each new member, or trial member, must prepare during their training, an OPNOTE should be written as follows:

OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what information should you record on a local copy of a message you passed to another operator, over?

1.30. NM-Ø28 Drill Messages

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, Annex C, paragraph 15.

Interactive Lesson

Drill messages are used for training and are not intended to be delivered like regular traffic. It may not be quite as important in the early messages you prepare but clearly identifying messages as drill messages is imperative when you generate Implementation, Essential Elements of Information (EEI), and other ECOM related messages. You don't want someone taking your homework and treating it like a real incident.

As a trial member, or new member, you will prepare all your messages as though they will be delivered by voice. Those members who have digital capabilities may modify one or more of their training messages to also be delivered digitally for review by the Training Director only. It is not too hard to remember which items to ignore while delivering the message by voice; it just takes practice.

Identifying your message as a drill message requires the following:

- Add the word DRILL after the word UNCLAS.
- Add an OPNOTE to the bottom of your message, following the second break (BT) that says OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, when delivering a drill message by voice, should you read the OPNOTE following the second break, over?

1.31. NM-Ø29 Message Composition for Voice versus Digital Delivery

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraph 603.

Interactive Lesson

There are a few points to keep in mind when composing a message to be delivered digitally:

- Include a DE line at the top indicating your call sign and a serial number.

- Add a line at the bottom of the message, after any OPNOTEs, with NNNN, I spell November November November November, NNNN.
 - For drill messages, add ZEU after the date-time-group. The additional information for digital formatting is always ignored when delivering a message by voice.
-

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should you compose your message differently if you know you are delivering your message by voice instead of digitally, over?

1.32. NM-Ø3Ø Your First 3rd Party to 3rd Party Message

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 5, paragraph 540.
 - NTP 8(D), Annex L.
-

Interactive Lesson

For your first 3rd party message, you don't need to worry about what the actual message has to say but you need to pay attention to the formatting required to get that message where it needs to go. All of your training messages should initially be written as though they will be delivered by voice.

Let's take a look at a very simple 3rd party message. I want everyone to copy this message and then we'll go back and take a look at the components, one by one. For the moment, we won't worry about the details of the exchange between two stations while passing a message. I will read the message as I would in passing any message and I want you to just copy as best you can for the moment. Listen to how some words are spelled out for clarity, how punctuation is sent, and how carriage returns are ignored.

```
R 061453Z SEP 2004
FM JESSICA SIMMONS OCEANSIDE CA/NNNØTOST SCA
TO TONY MAY/NNNØAFE SCA
5161 MANDARIN DR
OCEANSIDE, CA 92056
760-295-8078 NNNØAFE(AT)NAVYMARS.ORG
BT
UNCLAS DRILL
THE MESSAGE FORMAT LOOKS CONFUSING BUT EVENTUALLY BEGINS TO MAKE SENSE.
BT
OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.
```

For those of you following along with a printed copy of this training material, notice that the at sign in the e-mail address is written as (AT). Some characters are not supported when messages are traversing the auto-forwarding mailboxes and must be written out long hand.

The body of your message can contain a maximum of 50 words. If an address is included in the text, the address will count as only one word. If abbreviated texts are used, they will be counted as the number of words in the abbreviation. For example, NMAP ONE counts as two words. NTP 8(D), Annex L has a list of the available NMAP (Navy-Marine Corps MARS Abbreviated Texts). ARRL numbered radiograms are also available with the exception of ARL SEVEN.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, why is the opnote important for drill messages, over?

I would like all new members to compose their first 3rd Party to 3rd Party message addressed to:

Tony May
5161 Mandarin Dr
Oceanside, CA 92056-6441
760-295-8078
nnnØafe(at)navymars.org

and forward a copy to me by e-mail. I will look it over and send you feedback. When I approve of the format of the message, I will ask you to check into one of our regular traffic nets, list the message and deliver it, and then e-mail me the details of the net and person you passed the message to.

1.33. NM-Ø31 Listing Your Messages on Check In

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Now that you have a message to deliver, you need to know how to inform the NCS so your traffic can be assign to another operator and eventually make its way to its destination.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT.

When you're ready to deliver your first 3rd party, you announce the traffic you hold identifying the city, state and area code and prefix of the phone number when you check in as follows:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, one routine Oceanside, figures 76Ø–295, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

Listing the prefix of the phone number gives another station on the net a chance to tell the NCS they will accept your traffic if they can make a non–toll call to deliver it. The final delivery could be done by e–mail, telephone or US Postal Service.

If your message were addressed to someone outside of Southern California (SCA), you would list your traffic with the destination state. For example:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, one routine Arizona, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

The reason for the difference when the message is destined for another state is that the message will likely land on a digital mailbox to be delivered to a net closer to the destination. More than likely, your message would be assigned to a Traffic Rep rather than another SCA member checking into the net.

Exercises

NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, why would you want to list the six digits of a phone number along with the city and state for a 3rd message, over?

1.34. NM–Ø32 Passing Your First Message by Voice

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Passing a message to another operator by voice is an essential skill. We can't always rely on digital communications, especially if you're out in the field and have equipment problems. The tried and true method of getting a message through is delivering a message by voice.

There are a number of skills involved in effective voice delivery:

- Knowing how to give relay instructions.
- Knowing what to say and what not to say from a message formatted for digital delivery.
- Knowing how to phrase the spelling of words and numbers so that the operator receiving your message has a clear idea of what you're trying to say and ends up with an exact duplicate of the message you have in front of you.

The first step in delivering any message is getting instructions from the NCS on who you are going to pass the message to.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT that holds one routine message for a third party.
- Trial member station is NNNØTOST that will accept the message from NNNØTTTT and forward it to its final destination.

The NCS will instruct you to contact a station and pass your message in one of the following ways:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, call NNNØTOST and pass your traffic, out.

or

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, call NNNØTOST and pass your one routine message, out.

If the message you hold is for someone that is present on the net, you may hear a slightly different statement from the NCS:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, call your station and pass your traffic, out.

Unless the message you hold is for the person you are delivering the message to on the net, you will always start the delivery with the prowords MESSAGE FOLLOWS, RELAY.

When you are reading a message to another station, keep in mind that people can't write as fast as you speak. It's a good idea, in the beginning, to write out your message a second time while you are reading it to another station to get the timing right. The closer you are to timing what you read to how fast you can write, the less fills you will be asked for after the initial message content has been read.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØTOST, this is NNNØTTTT, over.

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, over.

NNNØTTTT says... this is NNNØTOST, message follows, relay, routine time zero six one four five three zulu september two zero zero four from...

A phrase you will often hear when messages are delivered by voice is, "I spell". I spell lets you know that the word you just heard is going to be repeated but spelled out phonetically and then repeated once more verbally. This is used to clarify the spelling of words that have the same pronunciation but different spellings. For example, a message that reads "are you going to?" would be spoken in the following way:

NNNØTOST says... are you going to, I spell, tango oscar, to, town question mark.

Copying tango oscar oscar instead of tango oscar would change the entire meaning of the question. By using the phrase, "I spell", you can be sure that the other operator wrote down an exact copy of what you have in front of you.

Once you've read the final break and the opnote, you should wait for the station to allow them to ROGER for the message or ask for any fills they require.

If you are receiving a message from someone else and you know you copied the message without any mistakes, you simply have to respond as follows:

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, roger, out.

If you missed something in the message, you will ask for as many fills as you need to make sure you have an exact duplicate of the original message.

NNNØTOST says... This is NNNØTOST, say again, word before eventually, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, I say again, word before eventually, sense, over.

NNNØTOST says... This is NNNØTOST, roger, out.

Now let's take another look at our first third party to third party message:

```
R 061453Z SEP 2004
FM JESSICA SIMMONS OCEANSIDE CA/NNNØTOST SCA
TO TONY MAY/NNNØAFE SCA
5161 MANDARIN DR
OCEANSIDE CA 92056
760-295-8078 NNNØAFE(AT)NAVYMARS.ORG
BT
UNCLAS DRILL
THE MESSAGE FORMAT LOOKS CONFUSING BUT EVENTUALLY BEGINS TO MAKE SENSE.
BT
OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.
```

Delivering the message by voice after the initial exchange would sound like:

```
Message follows relay routine time zero six one four five three zulu september
two zero zero four
from jessica simmons oceanside california slant n n n zero tango oscar sierra
tango southern california
to tony may slant n n n zero alpha foxtrot echo southern california
figures five one six one mandarin i spell mike alpha november delta
alpha romeo india november mandarin drive
oceanside california figures nine two zero five six
figures seven six zero dash two nine five dash eight zero seven eight
n n n zero alpha foxtrot echo at navymars I spell November alpha victor yankee
mike alpha romeo sierra, navymars dot org
break
```

unclas drill
the message format looks confusing but eventually begins to make sense period
break
opnote colon this message is for training purposes only period
do not forward period
over

Take note of the way punctuation is sent and the way certain words and abbreviations are spelled out to make sure the other operator has an exact copy of your message, character for character.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, why do we spell words and phrases out when passing a message by voice, over?

1.35. NM-Ø33 Say Again – Asking For FILLS

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), Annex C, paragraph C203.
-

Interactive Lesson

There are a number of phrases that are used to request text to request fills:

- WORD BEFORE
- WORD AFTER
- ALL BEFORE
- ALL AFTER
- TO

The first four are fairly self explanatory if you remember which prowords used in the initial delivery of the message must be treated as though they don't exist when you ask for fills. Never use the date-time-group, line numbers or the second break (BT) in requests for fills.

The proword TO, in the context of requesting a fill, is used to ask for text to be repeated from the first word to the second word, including both words mentioned. For example, if a message contained, "THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPS OVER THE LAZY DOG.", and you missed "BROWN FOX JUMPS", you could make the request:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØTTTT, say again, quick to over, over.

The response you would expect to hear is:

NNNØGAF FOUR says... this is NNNØGAF FOUR, I say again, quick to over, quick brown fox jumps over, over.

Notice that the first and second words from the request are repeated along with the text that was missed. If we go back and take a look at the header of a message, to request the from address again:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØTTTT, say again, FROM to TO, over.

Notice that the word TO appears twice in the request but this is not as confusing as it might sound at first. The operator receiving the request recognizes the proword TO and knows from experience that a fill request using the proword TO has a starting word and an ending word. This means the request is asking for everything from the FROM address to the TO, but not the TO address. If you did want the TO address also, then you would say say again FROM to break.

Whenever you are requesting fills for the header, the following prowords should be used in identifying which information you would like to have repeated:

- Routine or Priority or Immediate
- From
- To
- Info
- Break

Requesting fills in the header is a little different from requesting fills from the body of a message. In the header you always request fills using prowords and only prowords. For example, if you missed the date-time-group, you can request just that information:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØTTTT, say again, ROUTINE to FROM, over.

The response you would expect to hear would sound like:

NNNØGAF FOUR says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, I say again, ROUTINE to FROM routine time two eight one one three six zulu august two zero zero four FROM, over.

Remember, you should never refer to the date-time-group directly in any requests for fills. When requesting fills from the header, you must use the proword identifying the section of the header that contains the information you are looking for and you can use the break between header and the body. The break following the body of the message should never be used in requesting fills. If you missed the entire message, simply say SAY AGAIN.

If a message has several numbered or lettered paragraphs, it is acceptable to identify the paragraph in question to speed up the process of getting the fills you need. This is especially helpful when a phrase you are requesting occurs more than once in different paragraphs.

However the word “paragraph” is not a pro word so you must request the fill properly. An example of this would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØTTTT, say again, figures two period, all after network, over.

If the message is twelve paragraphs long, you are able to point to the missing text much quicker and simplify your request if you need everything up to the end of a paragraph but not the remaining paragraphs in the message. If you have a lot of confusion or hits in a paragraph, you might want to say: Say again figures two period to figures three period and have the entirety of paragraph 2 repeated.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the phone number from the destination address for a 3rd party to 3rd party message that has a header with a date-time-group, a from address, and a to address, over?

1.36. NM-Ø34 MARS Organization Chart

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D), chapter 2, paragraphs 223 and 224.

Interactive Lesson

Your immediate point of contact for all matters is your State Director (A "STATE" is usually one state, a part of a state, as in Southern California and Northern California, or a group of states, such as Colorado and Wyoming). If your State Director has an assistant for training, as is the case in Southern California (SCA), then this is the person who you should turn to first for assistance. You are also encouraged to bring any questions you may have to training nets. State Director's administrative callsigns in southern California are of the form NNNØGAF (en en en zero GOLF ALPHA FOXTROT). The assistants to the State Director have a number added to this callsign. The assistant for training has the number FOUR appended. NOTE: Except for email addresses, the number is always spelled out. An email address would be NNN0GAF4@navymars.org.

We'll take a very quick look at the list of staff positions available at each level, the state, the region, the area, and as assistants to Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS. Not all staff positions may be filled at any given moment.

Position	Title (Assistant for) at the State Level
Director	NNNØGAF is the State Director in Southern California (SCA).
ONE	NNNØGAF ONE is the Assistant State Director
TWO	NNNØGAF TWO is the Assistant to the State Director for Emergency Communications Planning
THREE	NNNØGAF THREE is the State Assistant for Net Operations and Reports
FOUR	NNNØGAF FOUR is the State Assistant for Training
FIVE	NNNØGAF FIVE is the State Assistant for Advanced Communications and Technology
SIX	NNNØGAF SIX is the State Assistant for Special Projects and High Technology
SEVEN	NNNØGAF SEVEN is the State Assistant for VHF and FM Repeaters
EIGHT	NNNØGAF EIGHT is the State Assistant for Public Affairs and Newsletters
NINE	NNNØGAF NINE is the State Assistant for the Library
TEN	NNNØGAF TEN is the State Assistant for Digital Systems Operations
ELEVEN	NNNØGAF ELEVEN is the State Assistant for Logistics
TWELVE	NNNØGAF TWELVE is the State Assistant for Equipment Administration
THIRTEEN	NNNØGAF THIRTEEN is the State Assistant for Personnel Administration
FOURTEEN	NNNØGAF FOURTEEN is the State Assistant for Computer or Data Processing
FIFTEEN	NNNØGAF FIFTEEN is the State Assistant for Interoperability
SEVENTEEN	NNNØGAF SEVENTEEN is the State Military Auspices Station Coordinator
EIGHTEEN	NNNØGAF EIGHTEEN is the State Postage Stamp Coordinator

The organization is divided into four areas, ten regions, and fifty states. Each area, region, and state has a director. Only the four area directors are enlisted personnel, usually a navy chief. All others are volunteers, just like you.

There are currently five levels within the Navy–Marine Corps MARS organization. The job descriptions for the following positions can be found in NTP 8(D), chapter 2. Some of these have recently been changed and some are being changed or considered for change. By reviewing NTP 8(D) and Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS broadcasts, you will have a better understanding of what is happening. The following information is furnished as a brief overview and is based on the most recent information available.

1. **Individual MARS Station (You).** As with all positions in MARS, your position is both administrative and operational. This means that you are more than a radio and a microphone. You will be required to maintain certain station files and records.
2. **State Director.** A State Director is an individual with the same requirements for files and records and is also responsible to maintain a personnel records system for all of the stations within their state. A State Director is authorized to appoint other individuals to fill various administrative and operational tasks associated with those duties. The State Director for southern California (SCA) is NNNØGAF SCA.
3. **Region Director.** A Region Director, like you and the State Director, is a volunteer. They are charged with the responsibility of coordinating the efforts of the individual states within their region so that they operate as a cohesive sub-system of the Navy–Marine Corps MARS team. A Region Director is also authorized to appoint members to fill staff positions to assist

him with his administrative and operational responsibilities. The Region Nine Director is NNNØAS9 AZ.

4. **Area Director.** An Area Director is not a volunteer, he or she is an enlisted Chief Petty Officer. More specifically, he or she is an Information Technician Chief. The Area Director is responsible for the completion of the Navy–Marine Corps MARS mission and the welfare and morale of each person at the levels mentioned above. The Area Director is NNNØASE SCA.
5. **Deputy Area Director.** The Deputy Area Director is the only volunteer position that fills a role that requires him to perform the duties of the Area Director when that director is on leave or otherwise not available. He exercises the same authority and responsibility as the Area Director and must maintain the same records and files as the Area Director. The Deputy Area Director is NNN0ASE One AZ.
6. **Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS.** Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS is a salaried civilian that is responsible to Commander, Naval Network and Space Operations Command, abbreviated COMNAVNETSPAOPSCOM. Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS is sometimes abbreviated as CHNAVMARCORPMARS and has a call sign of NNNØASA VA.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the personal call sign of the State Director for Southern California, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the personal call sign of the State Directors Assistant for training in Southern California, over?

1.37. NM–Ø35 Chain of Command

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Navy–Marine Corps MARS follows the Navy and Marine Corps concept of "Chain of Command". In your dealings with the leaders of MARS you do not skip levels. If you have a matter that requires the attention of the Region Director, you must go through your State Director to get to him. If the attention of Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS is required, you must go through your State Director, Region Director, and the Area Director to get to him. Just remember, just like any other organization, you should not go over anybody's head in Navy–Marine Corps MARS.

Administrative call signs at various levels have a common prefix:

SCA State Level. NNNØGAF

Region Nine Level. NNNØAS9

Pacific Area Level. NNNØASE

Any messages that are heading out of state for any reason should include your State Director, NNNØGAF, in the list of info addresses.

As you progress in Navy–Marine Corps MARS, you are going to discover that advancement is encouraged. You can start off by becoming a member of your State Directors staff and learn the different positions. Each position has its challenges and rewards. You will find that the Directors at all levels are always looking for the individuals who are willing to put out the extra effort to fill one of their vacancies or to replace a person that wants to step up or down from the position they currently hold.

You are not alone, there are about 1700 trained Navy–Marine Corps MARS members linked by a fairly sophisticated automatic radio digital forwarding message system completely independent of telephone circuits and power lines. A like number of members are also in each of Army and Air Force MARS, with similar training and capabilities. It may be of interest to you to tune in and listen to or actually check into these nets. At present, you are authorized to check into any of the Pacific Area traffic nets for which the frequency has been authorized for use in your location, and any Army or Air Force traffic nets. Note that this does not extend to Administrative Nets which may have restricted staff membership.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the administrative call sign for the assistance for Emergency Communications Planning at the region level, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the administrative call sign for the assistance for Interoperability at the area level, over?

1.38. NM–Ø36 Multiple Addresses and Your First Admin Message

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Previously, we briefly touched upon action and info addresses. Your first multiple address administrative message is not much more complicated than your first 3rd party to 3rd party message. In fact, in some ways it's a little simpler.

The addresses you list on an administrative message fall into two categories:

- **Action.** Action addresses fall under the proword TO in the header of the message.
- **Info.** Info addresses fall under the proword INFO in the header of the message.

There can be any number of addresses listed on your multiple address administrative message but they will all be Navy–Marine Corps MARS addresses.

Administrative messages can range from very formal, with a subject, reference list, and several paragraphs, to fairly informal where a single sentence is all that is need to convey the necessary information.

References are documents or previous messages that you want to refer to in the body of your message. You may be discussing further details about a conference that you talked about in a message from a couple of months ago or you may wish to refer to the content of a document like NTP 8(D) to resolve some confusion. Using references reduces the amount of information you need to repeat.

When you list references, you generally want to itemize them as (A)lpha, (B)ravo, (C)harlie, etc. When you have multiple paragraphs, you generally want to number them numerically. Try to avoid using unnecessary indentations in long messages; numbered paragraphs should be all that is needed to clarify one distinct line of thought from another.

Let's take a look at a simple form of administrative message. I would like all stations on this net to copy the message and ask for any fills required. You can never practice this essential skill too much.

```
R 080258Z SEP 2004
FM NNN0TTTT SCA
TO NNN0GAF FOUR SCA
INFO NNN0GAF SCA
BT
UNCLAS DRILL
ASKING FOR FILLS JUST TAKES TIME, PATIENCE, AND PRACTICE AND I WILL
IMPROVE OVER TIME.
BT
OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.
```

Exercises

NNN0???, this is NNN0GAF FOUR, spell the state abbreviation phonetically for Southern California that should appear following a Navy–Marine Corps MARS call sign when it appears in the header of a message, over.

Looking for: Sierra Charlie Alpha.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the difference between the list of addresses in the TO line versus the list of addresses in the INFO line, over?

Looking for: Addresses listed in the TO line are expected to take some action based on the content of the message. Addresses listed in the INFO line are only receiving a copy of the message for their personal awareness but are not expected to and should not take any action based on the content.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should you read every character of a digitally formatted admin message when you pass the message to another station by voice, over?

1.39. NM-Ø37 Listing Traffic With Multiple Addresses

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Listing a message with multiple addresses is not much different from listing messages with single addresses. There are a couple of things to keep in mind:

- Are the addresses destined for southern California (SCA)?
- Does the address have a ZEN/ in front of it?

Addresses that have a state other than Southern California (SCA) are all lumped together and listed with only the destination state when you list your traffic. The only detailed addresses you want to worry about in the listing of your traffic are those addresses destined for someone in Southern California (SCA).

Addresses that have ZEN/ in front of them have already received a copy of the message by other means and do not need to be listed or sent another copy of the message.

Let's take a look at an example. Suppose we have a routine message with the following header:

```
R 091708Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØGAF SCA
ZEN/NNNØGAF SEVEN SCA
INFO NNNØGAE NCA
NNNØGAE SEVEN NCA
BT
```

This message has two destinations that are outside of Southern California (SCA) and one destination that has already received a copy of the message

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Alternate Net Control (ANCS) is NNNØANC and has no traffic for the net.
- Traffic Rep is NNNØTRA has no traffic for this net.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and has no traffic for this net.

Listing the traffic above would sound like:

NCS says... 9S1B, this is NNNØNCS, over.

Traffic Rep says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTRA, no traffic, over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, one routine drill multi, over.

You can expect net control to call you back to ask for the list of addresses. When you have just one address, you can list that information right away but when you have any messages with multiple addresses, you want to give net control the opportunity to call you for the list of addresses when they are ready to take down a list.

Completing the listing for your traffic would sound like:

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, list your addees, over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, Addees are NNNØ golf alpha foxtrot and Northern California, over.

NNNØNCS says... This is NNNØNCS, roger, out.

You may not hear who to contact to pass your message right away. A number of other call ups could happen between the time you list your traffic and the time that traffic is assigned to someone. This is done so that stations checking into the net have the option of requesting your message and to give the NCS a chance to pick the station that will be able to copy your message the best given the current propagation.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what does the prefix ZEN/ mean when it appears before one or more addresses in the header of a message, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, if you hold a message with multiple addresses that are all outside of Southern California, how would you list this traffic while checking in, over?

Looking for: I list one routine followed by the name of each destination state.

1.40. NM-Ø38 Relay Instructions

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Relay instructions are instructions you give to stations to inform them of what to do with the message you are about to send them. You only need to provide relay instructions if the message is not addressed directly to the person who is accepting it.

Let's take another look at a simple multiple address administrative message:

```
R 080258Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØGAF FOUR SCA
INFO NNNØGAF SCA
BT
UNCLAS DRILL
ASKING FOR FILLS JUST TAKES TIME, PATIENCE, AND PRACTICE AND I WILL
IMPROVE OVER TIME.
BT
OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.
```

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT that holds one routine message for NNNØGAF and NNNØGAF FOUR.

The first thing you'll encounter after listing your traffic is instructions from the NCS on who to call to deliver your message.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, call NNNØLFD for NNNØGAF, call NNNØAFE for NNNØGAF FOUR and pass your traffic, out.

Now, you need to call each station to make sure they can hear you.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØLFD, this is NNNØTTTT, over.

NNNØLFD says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØLFD, over.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØAFE, this is NNNØTTTT, over.

NNNØAFE says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØAFE, over.

Next, give the relay instructions and pass the message. You never need to ask if a station is ready to copy; all stations on the net should be ready to copy a message at any time. If a station is unable to copy a message for whatever reason, they should let you know on the initial call before you give the relay instructions.

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØLFD, NNNØAFE, this is NNNØTTTT, message follows. NNNØLFD relay NNNØGAF, NNNØAFE relay NNNØGAF FOUR, routine time zero eight zero two five eight zulu september two zero zero four from NNNØTTTT southern california,...

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, in a message with a single addressee, do you need to give explicit relay instructions, over?

1.41. NM-Ø39 Your Monthly Off-air Participation Reports

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - Pacific Area Ops Guide, chapter 6.
-

Interactive Lesson

Monthly off-air participation reports are compiled by the State Thirteen and forwarded to the Region Thirteen, or to the Area Thirteen when there is no Region Thirteen. At the area level, these totals are tracked and reported, every quarter, to Chief MARS in Virginia. It is imperative that each and every station prepare a monthly off-air participation report as these numbers are directly referred to in the preparation of annual budgets and justifications for our funding by the Navy.

Message preparation and delivery is an essential skill and every member who prepares a monthly off-air participation report gets the necessary practice to keep these skills fresh and sharp. It is in everyone's best interest to become completely comfortable with message preparation, listing traffic and delivery of traffic so that these tasks eventually become second nature. This not only improves the efficiency of the traffic nets but will play a critical role in our ability to fulfill our ECOM mission.

NTP 8(D), chapter 3, paragraph 323, sub paragraph A states that each member must attain 18 hours of participation per quarter. This participation may be split between on-air and off-air activities. The Pacific Area Ops Guide, Chapter 6, paragraph 1, sub paragraph A gives an outline of the types of activities that fall under on-air and off-air participation. Some examples of off-air participation include studying NTP 8(D), the Pacific Area Ops Guide and other ECOM and training materials, working on communications equipment, operating on nets in other areas, and operating on Army and Air Force MARS nets.

Let's take a look at an off-air participation report for a new member. For this example, we will not be generating a drill message but rather a real message that will report your time for the past month.

```
R 301839Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØGAF THIRTEEN SCA
INFO NNNØGAF SCA
BT
UNCLAS
SUBJ: OFF-AIR PARTICIPATION FOR THE MONTH OF SEP 2004
OTHER HOURS: 97
BT
```

Each monthly report should have a subject line that identifies the month and year of the report. In our example, the subject line reads, "SUBJ: OFF-AIR PARTICIPATION FOR THE MONTH OF SEP 2004". The second and last line of the report identifies the number of hours you have invested in off-air activities. The simplest way to convey this information is with the words, "OTHER HOURS", followed by the total number of hours for the month.

When you create your off-air participation report, the number of hours you report should be rounded to the next highest whole number for each major task. For example, if you spent 5 hours and 45 minutes studying and working on portable antennas, you would record 6 hours for your off-air participation. If you only spent 5 hours and 5 minutes, you would still record 6 hours for the time you invested. At the end of the month, you total up all the times and report them as one sum for the entire month.

When you are tracking your hours, all times should be recorded in zulu time. The reporting period for off-air participation reports begins at 0000Z on the first day of the month and ends at 2359Z on the last day of the month. These reports should be listed and delivered on one of the HF traffic nets every month as this is the best way to keep your skills sharp.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, who should your off-air participation reports be addressed to, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what is the deadline for delivering off-air participation reports each month, over?

Looking for: within 48 hours of the end of the month.

1.42. NM-040 Copying Traffic Assigned To Your Station

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

When a NCS has assigned a piece of traffic to your station, all you need to do is make sure you have an exact duplicate of the message being sent and make sure the message reaches its intended destination. The only expectation is that all messages should be delivered over the air at least once; once you receive a message you can deliver it via other means such as:

- Telephone
- Email
- US Postal Service

A few things to keep in mind when copying a message from another station:

- Listen for the prowords in the header to recognize when to start a new line.
- Line feeds / carriage returns are never vocalized.
- All punctuation marks are vocalized.
- Break is typically written as BT.
- UNCLAS is sometimes followed by other prowords like DRILL or EXERCISE.
- Everything sent through the digital mailboxes should be in upper case.
- The @ symbol in e-mail addresses must be translated to (AT) for digital traffic and is read to another station as "at sign".
- The phrase "I spell" should remind you that the last word or phrase you heard will be spelled out phonetically and then repeated one more time before continuing with the rest of the text of the message. It may also cue you that the following word will be spelled phonetically when that word is difficult or impossible to be spoken or is simply a group of letters, as in an acronym.
- The proword "figures" usually indicates that a string of numbers with embedded characters follows. The word following "figures" should tell you whether you're copying numbers or the actual word "figures".
- Don't worry if you miss bits and pieces on the first delivery; you always have a chance to ask for as many fills as necessary to get an exact copy of the message being sent. In the case of digital traffic, you have to make a judgment call as to whether it will be faster to ask for a few missing words or ask to have the whole message or paragraph sent again.
- Word your requests for fills carefully. You want to keep the request as short as possible but give enough information to let the sender know exactly what text you need to hear again.

Remember, accuracy is valued above all else when handling traffic. Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Trial member station is NNNØTTTT that holds one routine message being sent to NNNØTOST for relay.
- Trial member station is NNNØTOST that will accept delivery of the message from NNNØTTTT and forward it to its final destination.

Take your time and make sure you are sure you have an exact copy before saying:

NNNØTOST says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØTOST, roger, out.

Saying "roger, out" after accepting a piece of traffic tells the sender that you have an exact copy and their responsibility for the delivery has been transferred to your station.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is **NNNØGAF FOUR**, when accepting traffic for someone other than yourself, what does the phrase, "relay, routine time..." tell you to do, over?

1.43. NM-Ø41 Service Messages

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), chapter 6, paragraphs 620 through 624.
 - NTP 8(D), Annex C.
-

Interactive Lesson

Service messages are sent from one operator to another to inquire about prior message traffic. A common service message is used to indicate the inability to deliver a message because of missing information an inability to contact the recipient. Generally, under these conditions the service message will include a request to cancel and file the message:

```
R 092144Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØTOST SCA
BT
UNCLAS SVC
ZDE3 YOUR 121343Z SEP 2004. PHONE NUMBER WAS NOT IN SERVICE AND
MAIL WAS RETURNED WITH NO FORWARDING ADDRESS.
BT
```

If you were the station initiating the service message, it is your responsibility to inform the person who originated the message the reason it could not be delivered. Try to obtain additional information about the addressee so that the message may be sent again. This should be a clue to you that when you accept a message from a neighbor or anyone else for transmission via MARS, that you need to record the name and telephone number and possibly address of the person in your station files. You may have to communicate a non-delivery or a return message to them at a later date.

You can talk plainly and openly in the body of a service message but you can also use Q and Z signals for brevity. Don't be afraid to say what you want to say to the other operator.

Suppose you accepted a piece of traffic and realized after the net that there was something that didn't sound right. For example, if a message from NNNØGAF TWO informing people of an upcoming exercise on Sept 18, listed the year as 2007, you might want to find out if that was just a typographical error and whether the year in question really is 2007.

Your message might look something like this:

```
R 092144Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØGAF TWO SCA
BT
UNCLAS SVC
INT ZDK YOUR 090833Z SEP 2004 SAYS 2007 INSTEAD OF 2004, IS THIS
CORRECT?
BT
```

A typical response to this request might look like:

```
R 092144Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØGAF TWO SCA
TO NNNØTTTT SCA
BT
UNCLAS SVC
ZDK 090833Z SEP 2004. 2007 SHOULD BE 2004 INSTEAD.
BT
```

Probably the most common and most misunderstood service message is a tracer message.

Assume the following:

- NNNØTTTT sent a message for NNNØAFE to NNNØTOST.
- NNNØTOST forwarded the message to NNNØTUFT.
- NNNØTOST originates a message to find out why the original message did not reach its destination.

A tracer message from NNNØTOST would look like:

```
R 191909Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTOST SCA
TO NNNØTUFT SCA
INFO NNNØASA VA
NNNØASE SCA
NNNØAS9 AZ
NNNØGAF SCA
NNNØTTTT SCA
BT
UNCLAS SVC
A. NNNØTTTT 062204Z SEP 2004 NOTAL
1. NNNØTTTT CLAIMS NON-DELIVERY OF REF A.
2. TRACE TO DESTINATION AND ADVISE ALL CONCERNED.
BT
```

NOTE: The NOTAL in Ref A, means that not all the addressees of this message received a copy of the message in question. They were not addressees on it.

Lets take another look at the addresses in the header for a moment.

```
R 191909Z SEP 2004
FM {station that forwarded the message}
```

```
TO {next station that handled the message}
INFO NNNØASA VA {Chief Navy-Marine Corps MARS}
NNNØASE SCA {Area Director}
{Senders Region Director}
{State Director to keep him up to date with what is going on}
{List of previous stations involved in the trace}
BT
UNCLAS SVC...
```

If the two stations involved were from different regions, the addressing would look a little different.

```
R 1919Ø9Z SEP 2ØØ4
FM {station that forwarded the message}
TO {next station that handled the message}
INFO NNNØASA VA {Chief Navy-Marine Corps MARS}
NNNØASE SCA {Area Director}
{Senders Region Director}
{Region Director of the region that the message was destined for}
{State Director of the state that the message was destined for}
{State Director to keep him up to date with what is going on}
{List of previous stations involved in the trace}
BT
UNCLAS SVC...
```

You should always add your State Director to the list of INFO addresses to keep him aware of what is going on. As a tracer message progresses from one station to the next in the chain of custody, each station that handled the message should be added to the list of INFO addresses. This serves to keep all stations involved in the trace aware of the progress.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, do service messages get created by third parties, over?

1.44. NM-Ø42 Exercise Messages

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, Annex C, paragraph 15.

Interactive Lesson

Exercise messages are used to distinguish between messages that refer to a real incident and messages that are used in the simulation of an incident to practice how we will respond to a real emergency.

To convert a real message to an exercise message, do the following to the real message:

- Add the word EXERCISE after the word UNCLAS along with the key phrase or name of the exercise that identifies the type of incident. For example, an earthquake exercise might use the line, "UNCLAS EXERCISE ROLLING THUNDER".
- Just prior to the second break (BT) you add everything on the line following the word UNCLAS. In our example we would have a line before the second break (BT) that reads, "EXERCISE ROLLING THUNDER".

Exercise messages are always forwarded to all listed addressees that do not have a ZEN/ prefix indicating they already have a copy of the message.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, would you expect to format a message as both a drill and an exercise, over?

1.45. NM-Ø43 Listing Priority and Immediate Traffic

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

When Priority or Immediate traffic is listed it generally is listed in the same manner as Routine traffic. Priority and Immediate messages must be handled before any routine, drill, or exercise messages. On occasion, a station with Priority and Immediate traffic may need to break into an existing station to station exchange or message transmission. When this is necessary, you repeat the precedence level of the message you hold three times before identifying your call sign. When the NCS calls you back, you can list the immediate or priority traffic you hold.

The exchange would sound like:

NNNØTRA says... Immediate Immediate Immediate, NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTRA, one immediate multi, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTRA, this is NNNØNCS, list your addrees, over.
NNNØTRA says... this is NNNØTRA, I list one immediate for NNNØASE, NNNØGAF, NNNØGAF TWO, and Virginia, over.

Remember that the addresses for the local area are listed but all stations outside the local state should be listed by state name.

When you retrieve messages from the mailbox, you can identify these priority and immediate messages by the letter that appears in front of the date-time-group.

Priority messages are prefixed with the letter (P)apa.

Immediate messages are prefixed with the letter (O)scar.

Aside from the requirement to handle immediate and priority traffic before other messages on the net, the assignment and delivery of these messages is carried out like any other traffic that comes to a net.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, when should you list priority and immediate traffic, over?

1.46. NM-Ø44 The Navy-Marine Corps MARS Implementation Message

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D) Annex D.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, Annex C.

Interactive Lesson

You will find yourself in the position of having to generate, list and deliver an implementation report whenever you get a request from an individual representing one of the many agencies we have offered our services to.

Up until now, the formatting of your messages as drill messages has not been critical. Now that you're going to be generating messages that could be misunderstood as referring to a real emergency, it is imperative that you pay attention to the formatting of the message as a drill message to avoid confusion. You never know who may be listening in on the traffic nets.

Lets take a look at an example:

```
O 121659Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO NNNØASA VA
NNNØASZ GA
NNNØASE SCA
NNNØASE ONE AZ
NNNØAS9 AZ
NNNØGAF SCA
INFO NNNØASE TWO OR
NNNØAS9 TWO AZ
NNNØGAC AZ
NNNØGAC TWO AZ
```

NNNØGAE NCA
NNNØGAE TWO NCA
NNNØGAF TWO SCA
NNNØGBE NV
NNNØGBE TWO NV

BT

UNCLAS DRILL

SUBJ: ECOM IMPLEMENTATION

1. WILDLAND FIRES AND HIGH WINDS HAVE DISRUPTED COMMUNICATIONS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.
2. YES, MR. CHARLES SMITHE, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY ECOM DIRECTOR, 619-555-Ø199
3. YES
 - A. ESTABLISH ECOM NET (9S1E) ON NFD PRIMARY, NCC SECONDARY, AND DEPLOY ART TO CORONA, CA.
 - B. NONE
 - C. NONE

BT

OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.

The addressing for this message may be a little difficult to understand in the beginning without the benefit of a membership roster. While you are in training, you will need to rely on the guidance of your State Directors Assistant for Training for confirming the proper state to assign to the various area and region call signs.

The first item of note is the precedence of the message. Implementation reports are always sent with a precedence of immediate which is abbreviated by the letter (O)scar on the date-time-group line.

Remember to format your training message as a drill message.

Notifying neighboring states of the emergency is a judgment call. If there is even the slightest possibility that they can lend assistance, it is a good idea to include them in the address list for this message.

Keep the wording as simple and clear as possible. You don't want to make this long message any longer than necessary, but you want to be sure to include all the essential components to get a response rolling as soon as possible.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and holds the above immediate traffic.

The listing of this traffic as soon as you hear the first call up would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says...NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, one immediate drill multi, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, list your addees, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, addees are NNNØASE, NNNØGAF, NNNØGAF TWO, New York, Arizona, Oregon, Northern California, and Nevada, over.

Only the addresses for the local area are listed and all others should be listed by state name.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can anyone that calls a Navy–Marine Corps MARS member activate our services, over?

1.47. NM–Ø45 The Area Mailbox (ADN MBO) and Winlink

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Navy–Marine Corps MARS has a unique network of auto–forwarding digital mailboxes that forward traffic to the nearest node where a particular message is destined.

The delivery of messages from one mailbox to another is not dependent on commercial communications but HF radios instead. Even when commercial communications channels have broken down, messages will still make it from one region to another via HF.

Traffic reps spend more time than other members visiting the mailboxes to check for traffic destined for their local traffic nets but personal mailboxes also exist.

While the individual operators may have many digital modes available to them for passing traffic, the mailbox (often abbreviated as MBO) has only two modes available, PACTOR and AMTOR ARQ. AMTOR ARQ is also known as AMTOR Linked or AMTOR Mode A.

During the year 2008, the MDS system is being phased out and replaced with a new system based on the Winlink network. This network has the ability to use the Internet, VHF or HF to deliver messages. When you receive your full membership, it is a good idea to become familiar with the Winlink system and equip your station with the capability to send and receive messages using it.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can any Navy–Marine Corps MARS member connect to a mailbox and list traffic waiting for their area, over?

1.48. NM–Ø46 Traffic Reps

Reference Materials

- This training document.
-

Interactive Lesson

Traffic reps represent a particular net. Traffic reps are charged with the responsibility of checking the Area mailbox on their assigned days for any traffic destined for their state or area. This traffic is brought to the daily traffic nets and delivered based on the instructions of the NCS.

A traffic rep is often assigned the responsibility of accepting and forwarding traffic to the mailbox for messages that are destined outside of Southern California (SCA).

Messages that are brought to a traffic net but not successfully delivered for whatever reason must be brought to the next traffic net. This requires some coordination between all of the members acting as traffic reps throughout the week.

More details about traffic rep responsibilities and duties are available from another training guide geared specifically towards those individuals that will be acting in that capacity.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, on which call up does a traffic rep typically check in, over?

Answer: Any. There are no priorities established any more.

1.49. NM-Ø47 Asking For FILLS – Round Two

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), Annex C, paragraph C203.
-

Interactive Lesson

What we're going to do now is copy a message that I have created and addressed to a number of you. In the initial pass, request fills as you normally would. Once everyone has a copy of the message, I will ask individual stations to make a request for a specific piece of text and it will be up to you to phrase your request appropriately.

[Call each station on the net individually and add them to the list of info addresses]

NNNØ???, THIS IS NNNØGAF FOUR, OVER

THIS IS NNNØGAF FOUR, MESSAGE FOLLOWS,

R 281808Z AUG 2004
FM NNNØGAF FOUR SCA
TO NNNØ??? SCA
INFO NNNØ??? SCA
NNNØ??? SCA
BT
UNCLAS

SUBJ: SCA TRAINING

1. I HOPE TO PROVIDE A FRIENDLY AND CHALLENGING TRAINING ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES NEW MEMBERS TO CHECK INTO AS MANY NETS AS THEY CAN AND LOOK FOR ITEMS THAT THEY DO NOT YET UNDERSTAND TO HELP GUIDE THEIR STUDIES BEYOND THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A FULL MEMBER.
 2. ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO WORK WITH OTHER MEMBERS, NEW AND OLD, TO PROVIDE WHATEVER ASSISTANCE THEY CAN. MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT NNNØGAF FOUR AT 555-555-5555 OR VIA EMAIL AT NNNØGAFFOUR(AT)NAVYMARS.ORG AND I WILL TRY TO ASSIST OR POINT YOU TO SOMEONE THAT CAN LEND ASSISTANCE.
 3. ALL MEMBERS SHOULD KEEP TRACK OF ALL OF THEIR OFF-AIR PARTICIPATION THAT IS BENEFICIAL TO MARS, ROUNDED TO THE NEXT HIGHEST HOUR.
 4. ALL MEMBERS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO COPY MESSAGE TRAFFIC WHENEVER THEY CHECK INTO A NET.
 5. NAVY-MARINE CORPS MARS, PROUDLY SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE.
- BT
NNNN

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, over?

[Call each station and make sure everyone has a full copy of the text.]

For the sake of time, I am only looking for the actual request you would make for the phrase I will give you. For example, if I ask you to request a fill for the last three words of the message, I would like to hear an answer that sounds like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØTTTT, figures five period, say again, all after proudly, over.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request a fill if you missed the words "PREPARED TO COPY" in figures four period, over? NNNØGAF FOUR, this is NNNØ???, say again, figures four period, be to message, over.

Remember, the proword TO can be used to request a fill for words between a starting word and an ending word including the two words from the request.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the second address in the INFO address list, over?

Remember, when requesting fills from the header, you must use the proword identifying the section of the header that contains the information you are looking for and you can use the break between header and the body. The break following the body of the message should never be used in requesting fills.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the entire header, over?

Remember, the break between the header and the body can be used as an anchor point for requesting fills so asking for ALL BEFORE BREAK is a valid request.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the phone number, over?

When you use the proword TO in a request for a fill, it is best to choose words that are easy to recognize and not common words that may appear multiple times.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the subject line, over?

Remember, you can use the first break in a message as an anchor point when requesting fills. You should not refer to line numbers in your requests.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the from and to addresses, over?

The beginning of the header is defined as either the DE line (for a digitally formatted message) or the precedence (for a voice formatted message.) A request for a resend of the DE line would use the proword ALL BEFORE. Say again all before routine. A request for a resend of the date-time-group would use the TO proword. Say again routine to TO.

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, how would you request the word challenging from figures one period, over?

Remember, if you just need a single word, it may be easier to use the phrases WORD AFTER or WORD BEFORE to get the fill you require.

Any time you are requesting fills, you should choose the method that is clearest and requires the least amount of effort to provide you the information you requested. In other words, if you missed just a few words in a long paragraph, making two or three short requests for single words may be more efficient than asking for a repeat of the entire paragraph. Use your best judgment to get the traffic delivered as efficiently as possible but never sacrifice accuracy for speed.

Exercises

For those trial member stations on frequency, I would like to receive a copy of the message you wrote out tonight by email.

1.50. NM-Ø48 The Department of Defense Essential Elements of Information (EEI) Message

Reference Materials

- This training document.
 - NTP 8(D), Annex D, paragraphs D900, D901, D902, and D903.
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Interactive Lesson

Essential Elements of Information, or EEI, messages are special Department of Defense (DoD) messages sent through the Navy–Marine Corps MARS system. They use a special set of code words not used in other MARS messages.

Because the message is a pro-forma message, all paragraphs must be present in all EEIs you create. There are notes in NTP 8(D) that outline what phrases you should use when you don't have information for a given paragraph. NTP 8(D) also provides a list of identifiers to be used in identifying the event rather than the explicit descriptions of the event in question. For example, rather than stating earthquake as the event identifier, rolling thunder is to be used instead.

Here is an example of an EEI:

```
O 151616Z SEP 2004
FM NNNØTTTT SCA
TO ZEN/AAN3EEI VA
INFO NNNØASA VA
NNNØASZ GA
NNNØASE SCA
NNNØASE ONE AZ
NNNØASE TWO OR
NNNØAS9 AZ
NNNØAS9 TWO AZ
NNNØGAF SCA
NNNØGAF TWO SCA
BT
UNCLAS DRILL SUBJ: EEI REPORT
1. REF: FALLEN STAR/SCA
A. COMMERCIAL AIRLINER CRASHED TRI CITY MEDICAL CENTER
1313 WEST VISTA WAY OCEANSIDE CA 171708Z JUN 2004
B. UNKNOWN
C. SR 78 BOTH DIRECTION AT VISTA WAY IS CLOSED.
ONLY ACCESS TO MEDICAL CENTER BY WARING ROAD.
D. BUSINESSES ALONG PLAZA DRIVE SEVERELY DAMAGED, UNKNOWN.
E. ELECTRICAL POWER IS OUT, UNKNOWN.
F. LOCAL TELEPHONE SERVICE IS OUT. RADIO, TV, PUBLIC
SERVICE UNAFFECTED.
G. PERSONAL OBSERVATION.
H. LARGE CROWDS IN THE AREA.
DRILL
BT
OPNOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY. DO NOT FORWARD.
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If updates are made to an EEI, the subject line is changed by appending the number, spelled out, of the update. For example, a third update would have a subject that reads:

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SUBJ: EEI REPORT UPDATE NR 3
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On a final update, the subject should read:

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SUBJ: EEI REPORT UPDATE FINAL
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For actual incidents, the EEI should be e-mailed to:

- **TO:** AAN3EEI@Winlink.org, PAECOM@navymars.org

The subject of the e-mail should say, "ACTUAL INCIDENT/EEI/city_or_county_in_question SCA".

Keep the wording as simple and clear as possible. You don't want to make this long message any longer than necessary but you want to be sure to include all the essential components to get a response rolling as soon as possible.

Assume the following for demonstration purposes only:

- Net Designator is 9S1B.
- Net Control (NCS) is NNNØNCS.
- Trial member Station is NNNØTTTT and holds the above immediate traffic.

The listing of this traffic as soon as you hear the first call up would sound like:

NNNØTTTT says... NNNØNCS, this is NNNØTTTT, one immediate drill multi, over.

NNNØNCS says... NNNØTTTT, this is NNNØNCS, list your addees, over.

NNNØTTTT says... This is NNNØTTTT, addees are NNNØASE, NNNØGAF, NNNØGAF TWO, Virginia, Georgia, Arizona, and Oregon, over.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, when you send an EEI on a traffic net that has already been emailed to some of the addresses in the header, what changes, if any, should you make to the addresses before bringing it to a traffic net, over?

1.51. NM-Ø49 ECOM Reports

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- NTP 8(D) Annex D, paragraphs D700, D710, D720, D730, and D820.
- Pacific Area Ops Guide, Annex C.

Interactive Lesson

There are a number of reports required during an emergency and during exercises:

- Exercise Notification
- Essential Elements of Information
- Implementation Reports
- Situation Reports (SITREP)
- Termination Report
- After Action Report

You will typically be involved in the generation, listing, and delivery of these types of ECOM reports. It is important to remember that any Navy–Marine Corps MARS member, on their own initiative, can commit the entire MARS organization to the support of an emergency when they get a request for support from an individual representing the agencies that we support. We cannot commit our services without a request.

If you are involved at the scene of an emergency or linked to it in some special way, as a member of ARES for example, then you may also be sending situation reports (SITREPS.)

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, can any member of Navy–Marine Corps MARS expect to be involved in an ECOM exercise or real emergency, over?

1.52. NM–Ø5Ø Getting That Fateful Call

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

Eventually, we'll all pick up the phone and hear that request we all know is going to come some day. We'll be asked to respond to a real emergency and be expected to be prepared for anything that comes our way. This doesn't mean that we'll be expected to do things outside of our capabilities but we are expected to be up front about what we can and can not do at the time we are called. We all decided to become part of Navy–Marine Corps MARS for different reasons but the end result of what we're all trying to accomplish is to make a difference. While our availability to respond at different times throughout the year or throughout the week may be different, everyone is expected to perform to the best of their abilities and inform the person on the phone, or any other means that we've been notified, when we'll be available to respond.

Responding to an emergency doesn't always mean you have to jump in a vehicle and go somewhere. There are ART and SAT members that train for remote operations. You may be asked to operate from home and open an ECOM net or you may be asked to take a list of phone numbers, make a few calls, pass on the required information, and report back on the availability of the individuals you've been tasked with contacting.

There are too many combinations of activities that any one of us could be asked to do. The best that you can do is prepare yourself for as many scenarios as you can personally come up with. Here are a few preparedness examples:

- Keep paper and writing implements next to all the phones in the house.
- Have a couple of clocks or at least a wrist watch that is WWV–synchronized so that everyone is talking in the same time frames.
- Keep flashlights in well known places and check the batteries often.
- If you are going to participate as an ART member, have your gear organized in easy to grab containers so you can grab what you need quickly. Organize everything that belongs to one radio setup together so you'll spend less time getting on the air at your destination.
- Plan to always have emergency supplies for food and water to last at least 72 hours without public utilities of any sort.
- When the phone rings and you hear that first call out, remain calm, write everything down and make sure you have all the details you need before you hang up the phone.

Exercises

Practice, practice, practice. You owe it to yourself to run personal drills. It's easy to picture how you would respond by running scenarios in your mind but it's a whole different situation when you try to do it for real. Check into as many traffic nets as you can and accept as much traffic as you can when you are a full member. Handling routine traffic is a great way to practice the very same skills necessary in an emergency. Make sure and participate in the quarterly ECOM drills. Eventually you may decide that you would like to participate on an ART or SAT. ART preparedness calls for many personal and team practice drills to make sure everything is ready to go on-site at a moment's notice.

You may never remember everything when the time comes, but a little practice goes a long way towards forgetting less and less each time you practice.

1.53. NM–Ø51 The Broadcast System

Reference Materials

- This training document.
- www.navymars.org – at the national level and at the region nine level.

Interactive Lesson

Navy–Marine Corps MARS is guided by a series of messages called broadcasts:

- Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS Broadcasts.
- Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS Info Broadcasts.
- Pacific Area Broadcasts.

- Region Nine Broadcasts.
- Region Nine Info Broadcasts.
- Region Nine ECOM Broadcasts.
- Region Nine RDS Broadcasts.
- Region Nine Training Broadcasts.
- Many other categories of broadcasts.

When you are authorized to access the protected sections of the national website, spend a little time reading through the list of messages and familiarize yourself with the types of information contained in the various categories.

The Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS broadcasts outline policy changes from the top of the chain of command. At any moment in time, the current NTP 8(D) and the active Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS broadcasts spell out the current policies in effect. These broadcasts are in effect until cancelled. The first broadcast each year lists the effective broadcasts. Normally, the broadcasts are cancelled when they become out of date or when NTP 8(D) and other documents/manuals has been updated to include the changes. These broadcasts should be kept until they are officially cancelled.

The Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS info broadcasts will not concern policy but are used to pass out information of usefulness to all members. There is no retention criteria for info broadcasts.

Region nine broadcasts are used to establish policy within the region and are in effect until cancelled. The first broadcast each year lists the effective broadcasts. Normally, the broadcasts are cancelled when they become out of date or when the Pacific Area Ops Guide and other documents/manuals have been updated to include the changes. These broadcasts should be kept until they are officially cancelled.

The region nine info broadcasts will not concern policy but are used to pass out information of usefulness to all members in the region. There is no retention criteria for info broadcasts. The region staff members, NNNØAS9 TWO, NNNØAS9 FOUR, NNNØAS9 EIGHT, and NNNØAS9 TEN have been authorized to issue broadcasts to all members in region nine. These broadcasts cannot be used to dispense policy but they can be used in the distribution of interesting information and the notification of ongoing events and transient data. Information in these broadcasts is advisory in nature. Only the Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS and region nine broadcasts can create or change policy.

State directors may issue broadcasts to their own state.

All Chief Navy–Marine Corps MARS, Area, region and state broadcasts are available on the area traffic nets for one week after their release. Members are encouraged to request and receive all broadcasts in digital form, for those that have digital capabilities. These broadcasts are also available on the website once you have to have access to the password restricted areas. These broadcasts are not expected to be sent every day for a week on the traffic nets; on the first net that a new broadcasts appears it is expected to be delivered to all stations but for the remainder of the week, these broadcasts will only be sent on demand.

As a Navy–Marine Corps MARS member, you are expected to have this material and keep it up to date. Not having digital capabilities will not prevent you from keep your files up to date as long as you can access the navymars.org website.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, in which broadcasts will you find policy changes, over?

NNNØ???. this is NNNØGAF FOUR, when will you find an updated list of the broadcasts in effect, over?

1.54. NM-Ø52 Acting As Net Control For The First Time

Reference Materials

- This training document.

Interactive Lesson

The first thing to remember when acting as net control for the first time is relax. If you get stuck and don't know what to do, you can always call another station and ask for advice or assistance.

Here is a short check list of things to remember when you act as net control:

- Open the net as close to the scheduled time as humanly possible. It helps to have at least one clock that is synchronized to an atomic clock. There are clocks and wrist watches available that will do this automatically.
- Speak clearly so everyone can understand you.
- Announce your call sign and the designator for the net on every call up.
- Keep a list of stations that check in and whether or not they hold traffic for the net. Record who is ANCS and TRAFFICREP for the net.
- Keep track of the frequency you are on. At the end of the month, if you hold a regular net control position, you will need to file reports for frequency usage and participation.
- If the assigned ANCS does not check in, be sure to assign that role to another station you believe has a strong and clear enough signal to take over the net should conditions change and no one can hear you any more.
- Remember to make call ups every 5 to 10 minutes.
- Ask other stations to make call ups for you.
- Remember to handle every piece of traffic that comes to the net; this could mean asking a station to hold that traffic for another net should the net run out of time.
- If all the traffic has been handled, turn the net into a free net and allow stations to call each other without asking your permission first. Don't forget to make call ups from time to time. It's important to let people know what net they are listening to if they just joined part way through the net.

- If a station asks for permission to close down, grant it, unless you need that specific station to do something later. They are doing this as a favor to you so you know who is still on frequency and who is not. If they just disappear, you won't know if their absence is due to propagation or something else.
- Remember to pay attention to the time and to remember to close down the net on or a minute or two before the scheduled end time arrives.
- Most of all, RELAX! Everyone is looking to help new operators become comfortable running a net and we've all been through our first net control experience in the past. There is nothing to be afraid of.

After your first net control experience, remember to email the details of the net to the regularly scheduled NCS so the month-end reports can be filed and all stations that checked into your net can receive on-air participation credit.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, should every net have an ANCS, over?

1.55. NM-Ø53 Assigning NNNØALL Traffic

Reference Materials

- This training document.
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Interactive Lesson

If you attend enough traffic nets, you eventually will hear traffic that is assigned to NNNØALL. Messages addressed to NNNØALL are intended for all stations on the net. The first time an “alpha lima lima” is brought to the net, it will be sent so that all stations may copy it. All messages sent on a MARS network must be rogered for. This duty normally falls to the NCS, but he has the option of having another station do the rogering.

Remember, all traffic must be rogered for, even general messages and broadcasts.

Once the traffic has been delivered, the receiving station has requested any fills necessary and rogered for the traffic, the NCS, at his discretion, can decide to read or assign the message to be read to all stations for the benefit of those that do not have digital capabilities.

Alpha lima lima traffic that is being read to the net does not have to be read as though it were being formally delivered to a specific station by voice; it is perfectly acceptable to paraphrase the contents of an alpha lima lima message as long as all of the important points are covered.

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what does the call sign NNNØALL refer to, over?

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what does the call sign NNNØALD refer to, over?

1.56. NM-Ø54 Where Do You Go From Here?

Reference Materials

- This training document.
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Interactive Lesson

There are a number of different areas to explore within Navy–Marine Corps MARS:

- Accepting a full time NCS or ALTNCS position.
 - Learning to become a full time Traffic Rep.
 - Volunteering to operate as a member of a Station Augmentation Team (SAT) geared towards the operation of key selected MARS region radio stations on a 24 hour basis.
 - Volunteering to be a member of an Auxiliary Radio Team (ART) capable of setting up a station with one or more radios in the field.
 - Working towards accepting a staff position so you can use your unique skills to help improve Navy–Marine Corps MARS as a valuable resource to those in need.
-

Exercises

NNNØ???, this is NNNØGAF FOUR, what areas of Navy–Marine Corps MARS appeal to you the most, over?