

Operations Manual
Wyandotte County / Kansas City, KS R.A.C.E.S
Chapter 2.8 NET OPERATIONS

NET CONTROL STATION (NCS) OPERATIONS

The Net Control Station (NCS) has total responsibility and authority over the net while in session, even over the Chief Radio Officer. The outcome of an exercise and/or a real emergency situation will rest in the hands of the Net Control. Here are some points to remember.

1. **YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF THE NET** but don't push your weight around. One of your jobs is to teach net discipline by setting the example.
2. Be on time and handle traffic on the net in a timely manner. Don't let the net get too informal and waste time.
3. Know your operators and their locations. You need to know how and where your net fits into the situation at all times.
4. Insure that your equipment and antennas are in good working condition. You always need to be heard by every station possible. Insure there is an alternate NCS standing by in case you drop off the air.
5. Generally the Radio Officer, but sometimes you, sets the net frequency. Know your alternates.
6. Get all the information you can (situation, station locations, shift lengths, frequencies, agency of primary responsibility, etc...) before you put your net into service.
7. **KEEP A LOG OF EVERY NET OPERATION.** (If traffic gets heavy and you have to send operators to other frequencies, you need to know where they went.) The call sign of operator, subject, and precedence for each piece of traffic is a minimum.

In all events the NCS log should contain the following information:

Name of Event
Name and Call Letters of NCS
Date and time of Net Activation.
Date, Time and Call Letters (or tactical calls) of all traffic handled.
If tactical calls are used, keep a list of Amateur Call Letters associated with each tactical call.

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8. In most RACES events the following additional information is to be requested and recorded by the NCS.

Starting time of all RACES Members.

Time that RACES Members arrived at site.

Time that RACES Members secured from (left) event.

Time that RACES Members arrive home.

Total Mileage of RACES Members.

9. If you are to relieve as NCS, monitor the net frequency for a period of at least 30 minutes

ALTERNATE NCS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Alternate NCS (ALT NCS) must be ready to take over the NCS responsibilities in the event that the NCS is unable to do so. This may occur before the net is activated or during net operations. If the ALT NCS is in a remote location the ALT NCS must also be keeping a net log in order to take over the net responsibilities in the event that the NCS goes off the air.

OPERATORS RESPONSIBILITIES

All operators need to know what to do and how to do it when it comes to operating on a RACES net. Each operator has a duty to be self disciplined. One operator who does not make an effort to be the best they can be could cause the net to be less than it should be. Here are some tips that all operators should heed:

1. Make sure you go to the correct frequency. Delays caused in getting all operators on frequency affect the whole net.
2. Be on time and handle traffic on the net in a timely manner. Don't let yourself get too informal and waste time.
3. Respond only to the instructions of the NCS. Always go through the NCS for any of your requests. Let the NCS run the net. Resist the temptation to help.
4. Insure that your equipment and antennas are in good working condition.
5. Know your equipment. Understand its operation. You may have to adapt to an unusual situation.

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6. Know your area of responsibility.
7. Get all information you can (situation, location, frequencies, shift length, agency of primary responsibility, reporting time, etc...) before going into action.
8. Do not leave the net without permission of the NCS. When temporary time off is needed or you wish to close your station, check out with the NCS first.
9. Be brief when transmitting to the NCS. Keep everything short and simple. Avoid personal conversations.
10. Know how the net runs. Learn the recommended net and traffic handling procedures.
11. REMEMBER, AS OPERATORS, WE PASS ON TRAFFIC EXACTLY THE SAME WAY WE RECEIVE IT. If you have a question, ask it. Do not assume anything when a piece of traffic is concerned.
12. KNOW THE PRIORITY FOR EACH PIECE OF TRAFFIC.
13. Insure, when possible, that you have each piece of traffic in writing. A later reference or correction may be required.
14. Keep a basic personal log of time, mileage, and critical events such as when arriving at site.

DIRECTED, FORMAL NET PROCEDURES

One of the most difficult operating procedures for most amateurs to follow is that of participating in a contact during communication operations. (Most are used to very informal conversations. Call signs are over used and unless someone specifically signs off it is sometimes hard to tell if the conversation is over.) Both excessive use of call signs and the sloppy "sign off" cannot be tolerated on a relatively busy emergency net. Too much time is wasted and some confusion occurs. The best rule is:

The station who initiates a contact will also terminate that contact.

The following example, using tactical call signs, is the preferred way to conduct a contact during emergencies.

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Example:

RACES 1: NET CONTROL this is RACES 1. OVER.

NCS: RACES 1, NET CONTROL, Go ahead.

RACES 1: I have traffic for POST 2. OVER.

NCS: Call your station. W0???, OVER.

RACES 1: POST 2 this is RACES 1. OVER

POST 2: RACES 1, POST 2, Go ahead.

RACES 1: I have traffic for the Post Commander OVER.

POST 2: Send you traffic. OVER.

RACES 1: ROGER, traffic follows.

BREAK.

(traffic)

BREAK.

POST 2: ROGER your traffic. WB0???, OVER

RACES 1: ROGER, KC0???, OUT.

The proword "OVER" leaves no doubt as to whose turn it is and the proword "OUT" insures that everyone knows the contact has ended.

Notice, the station who initiated the contact also terminated the contact. Everyone participating knows that the contact is definitely over and the frequency is clear for other traffic. Call signs were used only three times in each contact, yet there is no confusion as to who is speaking to whom they are speaking.
