

**NAVY-MARINE CORPS
MILITARY AFFILIATE RADIO SYSTEM
ALABAMA**

NNN0SYH
10 August 2009

From: State Director Navy-Marine Corps MARS, Alabama

To: All Alabama MARS Members

Subj: Letter of Promulgation, ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE (Revision A)

Ref: (a). NTP 8(D) Draft
(b). Joint Standard Operating Procedure for Calling and Operating a Voice Net of 22 November 2007
(c). Alabama Net Operations Guide of 5 June 2008

1. ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE (Revision A) is promulgated in support of references (a) and (b) to provide instructions for use by all members of Alabama Navy-Marine Corps MARS while operating on Alabama state traffic nets; or, in performance of their duties as Net Control Station (NCS) or Alternate Net Control Stations (ANCS) on Alabama state traffic nets; or, as WL2K traffic representative; or, as 4X1B/4X9B Net representative.
2. ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE (Revision A) is EFFECTIVE UPON RECEIPT.
3. ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE (Revision A) supersedes references (c).

/s/James B. Burrows

RECORD OF CHANGES AND CORRECTIONS

Enter Change or Correction Information in Appropriate Column

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Alabama Net Operations Guide (Revision A)

10 August 2009

SECTION A - INTRODUCTION

The ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE provides instructions to Alabama Navy-Marine Corps MARS members for proper operations on Alabama state traffic nets and as Net Control Station (NCS), or Alternate Net Control Stations (ANCS), or as Region Traffic Net or WL2K Representative. These instructions are provided in the following three sections:

Section B - NET OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section C - NET CONTROL STATION (NCS) PROCEDURES

Section D - TRAFFIC REPRESENTATIVE PROCEDURES

These sections are not mutually exclusive and must be understood by the members as one entity needed for effective operation on Alabama traffic nets. All Alabama members are expected to know and abide by these instructions.

SECTION B - NET OPERATING PROCEDURES

B-1. General

All Alabama Traffic Nets will be conducted under the direction of a Net Control Station (NCS) appointed by the Alabama State Director or designated representative. Net operations on all Alabama traffic nets will be conducted either as a **directed** net or a **free** net.

a. **Directed Net:** All nets will open and be conducted as a directed net until otherwise authorized by NCS. During a directed net stations must have permission of the NCS prior to transmitting. All message traffic shall be passed on a directed net. The NCS may authorize abbreviated call signs at their discretion. At all times the NCS will use their full call sign. A directed net is a time for formal, military correctness.

b. **Free Net:** After message traffic is passed and other net business is completed, the NCS may authorize a free net status. Full call signs must be used on a free net. Permission from the NCS is not required for stations to contact other stations during a free net. Additional check-ins with NCS may be made during a free net and no business or other communications may be conducted until check-in with NCS has been completed. Discussions during a free net should be limited to MARS areas of interest such as equipment, antennas, computers and software, welfare of members, weather, propagation, or similar subjects. Even during this more informal net status, the NCS retains the responsibility for circuit discipline. Upon declaring a free net NCS may at their discretion authorize stations to close down without permission of NCS.

c. **Digital procedures:** The primary digital mode for use on Alabama state nets will be MT63 (1000 Hz bandwidth-long interleave). Other modes may be used as necessary and as required by Region and Traffic Representatives in the performance of their duties.

B-2. Forbidden Practices

a. "On-the-air" conduct or communications causing embarrassment to, or that which is not in the best interests of the U.S. Government including MARS and its members.

b. Violation of radio silence or MINIMIZE when in effect.

c. Use of profane, indecent, or obscene language, either spoken or implied.

d. Use of RF power exceeding that which is authorized.

e. Use of VOX for transmitter keying.

- f. Use of unauthorized prosigns, prowords, or operating signals.

B-3. Net Times and Frequency

a. The 4A1B is scheduled for a maximum of 59 minutes; the 4A2B net may extend for 1 hour 59 minutes. All nets will remain open until at least 10 minutes after the net is called, and under normal conditions should close down not later than 5 minutes before the end of their allocated time.

- b. Active nets in Alabama are:

Net Desig	Local Time	Primary Mode	Frequency Pri/Alt KHz
4A1B	Ø7ØØ - Ø759	SSB	Note 1
4A2B	21ØØ - 2259	SSB	Note 1

Note 1: Net primary and alternate frequencies will be promulgated by separate means.

c. During times of heavy message traffic, NCS may send stations to an alternate frequency to pass messages.

d. Repeaters in Alabama operate on frequencies as designated in Annex G of the Central Area Operations Guide for 4A2 and 4A13 repeaters. Stations out of range of repeaters may use the output frequencies for these repeaters for simplex communications.

B-4. Net Opening and Check-In

a. NCS will open the net at the prescribed time with a three phase call up using the procedures outlined in Section C. These are:

- (1). Call for Traffic Representatives
- (2). Call for other stations with record traffic
- (3). Call for other stations

‘Record traffic’ is any formal traffic identified with a date-time-group (DTG).

b. All stations will conduct their check-in by listing their location (city or nearest town), their digital mode, if digitally capable, and their traffic.

c. Stations with digital capability will indicate their capability with the following statement during their check-in:

- (1). “ALL MODES” if AMTOR (FEC and ARQ), PACTOR (FEC and ARQ), and MT63 are available.
- (2). “MT63” if only MT63 is available.
- (3). “MT63 RECEIVE” if MT63 is available only in receive mode.
- (4). “AMTOR” if only AMTOR is available.
- (5). Combinations of “AMTOR” and “MT63” may be stated as needed.

d. Stations holding traffic will report their traffic in accordance with paragraph 5 below. Stations holding traffic which they are capable of transmitting by digital means will add the phrase “SCD” (Single Channel Data) phonetically after their traffic listing. Stations holding no traffic will so indicate by including the phrase “NO TRAFFIC.”

e. NCS will, after executing these first three phases of the call up, make a second call for additional stations and then request another station to make a “net call” as outlined in Section C.

- f. Example check-in for a digital ready station holding one routine message for NNNØGAA:

“(NCS) THIS IS (ur call) BIRMINGHAM, ALL MODES, ONE ROUTINE NNNØGAA, SIERRA CHARLIE DELTA, OVER”

B-5. Message Handling Procedures

a. General

(1). Messages handled on Alabama traffic nets may be of several types as authorized by NTP 8 series. They may originate from within the state or from out of state. They may be addressed to one or several stations (multi addree) and/or to a collective call, or to an individual (MARSGRAM/third party).

(2). Messages from within the state may be originated by any Alabama or other service MARS member or may be amateur refile.

(3). Incoming messages from out of state are normally brought by the Traffic/Net Representatives to Alabama traffic nets from the WL2K system or region traffic nets (4X1B or 4X9B). Only designated Traffic Representatives will pick up messages from the WL2K system.

(4). All messages will be listed and delivered in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

b. Precedence - Messages will be handled in accordance with precedence – higher precedence messages passed prior to lower precedence ones. Army and Air Force morale (M) messages will be treated as Routine precedence.

- (1). Flash (Z)
- (2). Immediate (O)
- (3). Priority (P)
- (4). Routine (R)

c. Listing Traffic

(1). Messages should be considered in four groups as follows:

- Addressee(s) within Alabama - listed by station call or collective call; or, if third party/MARSGRAM, listed by city/town.
- Addressee(s) outside Alabama but within Region Four - listed as “OUT OF STATE.”
- Addressee(s) outside Region Four - listed as “OUT OF REGION.”
- MARSGRAM for personnel aboard ships - listed as “AFLOAT.”

(2). On initial check-in to a net, stations will list message traffic with NCS as follows:

(a). If holding an **EEI Report**, list as “ONE IMMEDIATE EEI REPORT”

(b). Other messages will be listed by quantity, precedence and addree(s) with high precedence messages (Priority and above) listed before Routine precedence messages. Multi-addree messages will be listed using a combination of these statements.

Examples:

- “ONE PRIORITY NNN0GAA AND ONE ROUTINE NNN0GAA THREE”
- “ONE ROUTINE NNN0GAA AND NNN0GAA ONE, SCD”
- “ONE PRIORITY OUT OF REGION AND OUT OF STATE AND NNN0GAA TWO AND... etc.”

d. Routing Traffic - NCS will route traffic listed as above in the following order:

(1). High precedence “Out of State” and “Out of Region” traffic - Route to Traffic Representative.

(2). High precedence general messages - route to net

(3). High precedence in-state traffic - route to addressee(s) concerned.

(4). Routine precedence “Out of Region” and “Afloat” traffic - route to Traffic Representative.

(5). Routine precedence “Out of State” traffic - route to 4X1B Representative.

(6). Routine precedence general messages - route to net.

(7). Routine precedence in-state traffic - route to addressee(s). In case of third party/MARSGRAM route to a station nearest the city/town of the addressee and who is toll-free for the addressee or who will agree to deliver at personal expense. MARSGRAMS may be delivered via amateur radio refile.

(8). Messages may be held for a later net or mailed if no other delivery method is available. Messages that have not been delivered to an Alabama station after being listed for two consecutive nets should be delivered via e-mail.

e. Passing traffic - After the station holding a message for transmission has received the routing instructions from NCS, message transmission will proceed as follows:

(a). Station holding the message call the station(s) designated to receive the traffic stating the intend mode of transmission if digital. If transmission by voice is intended, no statement to that effect will be made.

(b). Each called station will respond in the order called.

(c). The message will be transmitted. The routing instructions provided by NCS will not be repeated by the sending station unless requested by a receiving station.

(d). Each receiving station will “roger” for the message, or request fills as needed, in the order initially called. If more than one message is being received by voice, each message will be ‘rogered’ (or fills requested) before proceeding to the next message.

Example dialog during passing of traffic:

Call by sending station:

If sending by voice

“AAA, BBB THIS IS XXX, ONE (or TWO, THREE..., etc.) ROUTINE, OVER”

If sending by digital

“AAA, BBB THIS IS XXX, ONE (or TWO, THREE..., etc.) ROUTINE MT63, OVER”

Response by receiving station(s):

“XXX THIS IS AAA, OVER”

“XXX THIS IS BBB, OVER”

Transmission by voice:

“THIS IS XXX, MESSAGE FOLLOWS:”

- Message transmitted slowly in logical phrases pausing frequently to listen for break-ins

“OVER”

- or - if more than one message is being transmitted

“MORE TO FOLLOW, OVER”

Transmission by digital:

“THIS IS XXX MESSAGE FOLLOWS MT63:”

(if tag line ending with prosign “K” included, no voice transmission by sending station needed at end of message)

‘Roger’ for the message(s) transmitted by voice:

“THIS IS AAA, ROGER, OUT:”

- or - if more than one message is being transmitted

“THIS IS AAA, ROGER, OVER”

‘Roger’ for message(s) transmitted by digital:

“THIS IS AAA, ROGER (or ROGER TWO, THREE... etc.), OUT.”

f. General Messages - NCS and the Traffic Representative will ensure that all General Messages are transmitted on two State nets for receipt by the maximum number of members. General Messages will be transmitted by both digital and voice modes and NCS will "Roger" for the net. If the Traffic Representative bringing the General Message to the net for the first time is unable to carry it to a second net, NCS will have another station accept responsibility to take the message to the next State net.

g. Message Delivery - Receiving stations must "Roger" for a message in order for delivery to be complete.

h. High Precedence Traffic - When high precedence message traffic is brought to the net, the NCS must act prudently to ensure timely relay of that traffic. Priority traffic demands more timely delivery than Routine. Immediate traffic denotes delivery by the swiftest method possible that is consonant with good communication procedure.

SECTION C - NET CONTROL STATION (NCS) PROCEDURES

C-1. General

The Net Control Station is the MARS authority on a day-to-day basis at the member station level. As such he/she is to maintain a high degree of personal skill, knowledge and performance as a Navy Marine-Corps MARS communicator.

C-2. Authority and Responsibility

a. Net Control Station (NCS) - The NCS is a station designated by appropriate authority to direct and control the operation of a net. The authority of the NCS extends only to the operation of the net; but, within that scope, decisions of the NCS are final. Corrective action on the net should be limited to that required to maintain or restore order. The NCS has the responsibilities of:

- (1). Expediting message traffic on the net.
- (2). Maintaining circuit discipline.
- (3). Limiting transmissions to the minimum.
- (4). Monitoring the net to determine and initiate corrective action on procedural discrepancies.
- (5). Ensuring the net is operated within frequency tolerance.

b. Alternate Net Control Station (ANCS) - The ANCS is expected to be on the net when assigned as ANCS. The ANCS will assume the duties of NCS when directed or when the assigned NCS fails to call the net after one minute has elapsed from the net commencement time. In the event the NCS drops from the net because of equipment or power failure, or for any reason, the ANCS will assume the duties of NCS.

c. NCS Loss - If both NCS and ANCS fail to assume the duty or drop from the net, another member should assume the duty as NCS.

d. ANCS Proficiency - In order to maintain proficiency ANCS are expected to operate as Net Control at least once per month. Thus, the ANCS will generally assume NCS duties during the third full week of each month starting on a Sunday.

C-3. Establishing a Net

a. NCS will open the net at the prescribed time with a three phase call up starting with the opening call and call for Traffic Representatives (4X1B/4X9B and WL2K Reps). Example:

“4A1B, 4A1B THIS IS (NCS) TRAFFIC REPS ONLY, OVER”

b. After the Traffic Reps have checked in and listed their traffic in accordance with paragraph B-5, NCS will next call for other stations holding traffic for the net. Example:

“4A1B THIS IS (NCS) , STATIONS WITH RECORD TRAFFIC ONLY. OVER.”

c. After stations holding record traffic have checked in and listed their traffic in accordance with paragraph B-5, NCS will call for other stations for the net. Example:

“4A1B, THIS IS (NCS) OVER”

Late check-in stations with traffic may also report in at this time.

d. NCS will repeat the call for other stations a second time

e. NCS will then select a checked in station to make a ‘Net Call’ with the phrase

“ (selected station) THIS IS (NCS) , REPORT RELAYS AND MAKE A NET CALL, OUT.” The selected station will proceed as follows:

(1). Relay any station that may not have been checked in by NCS.

(2). Call the net and request additional stations with the following call:

“4A1B THIS IS (ur call) , OVER.”

(3). Acknowledge additional check-ins by listing their call sign(s) advising them of net status (directed, free, abbreviated call signs, etc) followed by “ROGER, OUT.” At this point the additional check-ins are checked into the net.

(4). Report the additional check-ins (or “NO STATIONS HEARD”) to NCS by listing each station and all their check-in parameters.

(5). NCS will acknowledge the Net Call check-ins from the ‘Net Call’ station using only the phrase “THIS IS (NCS) , ROGER, OUT.”

(6). NCS will then list each station’s call sign followed by “THIS IS (NCS) , ROGER. OUT”

NOTE: Repeats or 'fills' should be requested as needed.

f. After receiving the ‘net call’ station’s report, NCS may at their discretion authorize abbreviated call signs, and then proceed to clear listed traffic.

C-4. Net Frequency Shift

(1). If it becomes necessary to shift the net to an alternate frequency, NCS will make an announcement twice to that effect, in the blind if necessary, and ask a designated station(s), or “any station” if no station(s) previously heard, to repeat the frequency shift announcement.

(2). After making the frequency shift, NCS will first allow 15-30 seconds for tuning on the new frequency, will then conduct a roll call of those stations acknowledged on the first frequency, and will then proceed with a check-in of additional stations. It is suggested that the NCS leave a member on the primary frequency for a few minutes to announce the frequency shift of the net.

C-5. Net Reports

a. Report Format - As soon as practicable after the net is concluded, the NCS shall send a net report to NNNØGAA THREE, using the following *pro forma* message format:

R Z 2009
FM NNNØ AL
TO NNNØGAA THREE AL
BT
UNCLAS

SUBJ: (4A1B/4A2B) NET REPORT FOR (date and month)

1. READ IN FOUR COLUMNS:

FREQ	MODE	HRS	MSGs
------	------	-----	------

_____	SSB	___	___
-------	-----	-----	-----

_____	SCD	___	___
-------	-----	-----	-----

 (see NOTES 1 and 2)

BT

NOTES:

1. SCD (Single Channel Data) refers to any type of digital transmission by stations on the net. This line will not be included if no digital transmissions occur.

2. When a digital transmission occurs on a net but no formal message has been sent by digital means (e.g., testing during the free net) the SCD line will be included showing Ø MSGS and a second paragraph will be added to the net report with a statement similar to:

“2. SCD TRANSMISSIONS OCCURRED DURING THIS NET WITH NO SCD RECORD TRAFFIC TO REPORT.”

3. Any frequency used by the net must be reported. One simple transmission constitutes use. "Hours" are always reported in whole, not fractional figures. Ten minutes is reported as 1 hour. Sixty-five minutes is reported as 2 hours.

4. Date used in the subject line of this report refers to the **calender** date per local time, **not** Zulu time.

b. Testing - The provisions of this paragraph also apply any time any member submits the required frequency use report for use of a frequency for testing when no net is in progress.

C-6. Collective, Specialty and Staff Call Signs

NCS should know the Alabama stations associated with Collective and Specialty Call signs. Following are some of the more frequently encountered Collective and Specialty call signs and their associated Alabama stations.

Collective Call Signs

NNNØALA - all Assistants to Area Directors: none in Alabama

NNNØALC - all State Directors: NNNØGAA/NNNØSYH

NNNØALD - all Area Directors: none in Alabama

NNNØALL - all MARS member stations

NNNØALR - all Region Directors: none in Alabama

NNNØALS - all stations on the net

NNNØALY - all Navy Auxiliary MARS Stations: NNNØNIG

Specialty and Staff Call Signs

NNNØAFL - all Afloat Specialty Net Stations and State Directors:
NNNØVGW, NNNØGAA/NNNØSYH

NNNØDVG - all Region Four State Directors and Assistants for ECOM:
NNNØGAA/NNNØSYH
NNNØGAA TWO/NNNØTJC

NNNØAS4 TWO - NNNØSYH

NNNØAS4 TEN - NNNØTJC

NNNØAST FIVE - NNNØVGW

C-7. NCS Script for Net Operations

A Net Control Station script is provided as Annex A for guidance to the NCS in the conduct of their net and should be followed as closely as possible during all nets. Net designator 4A1B is shown in the script for example purposes; replace with 4A2B as appropriate.

Calls for additional stations should be made frequently during the progress of the net using the phrase "4A1B THIS IS (NCS), OVER." If message traffic is light, a summary of errors noted during the directed portion of the net and an explanation of the proper methods by the NCS is very appropriate. Training is net time well spent.

This is elementary but - close each contact or attempted contact (say "Out") with station(s) before attempting another contact. If you expect or wish a response, say "Over," not "Out." You must identify your station each time you transmit.

SECTION D - TRAFFIC REPRESENTATIVE PROCEDURES

D-1. General

Traffic representatives are assigned for the 4X1B, 4X9B nets and WL2K delivery/pick-up duties. While all of these are 'traffic reps', it is customary and much less confusing to refer to them as the '4X1B Rep', the '4X9B Rep', and the 'Traffic Rep.' These terms will be used hereafter in assigning their duties and Responsibilities.

D-2. Traffic Rep Duties and Responsibilities:

- a. Pick up and deliver Alabama area traffic from/to the WL2K system.
- b. Take Out of Region and **priority** and above Out of State precedence traffic from state nets to the WL2K system as soon as possible.
- c. Check-in on state nets which meet during the period of duty.
- d. The period of duty of the Traffic Rep shall be from the beginning of the 4A1B net on the day of duty until the end of the 4A1B net following the day of duty. NCS will direct outgoing traffic from the 4A1B net to the oncoming Traffic Rep.

D-3. 4X1B Rep Duties and Responsibilities:

- a. Pick up and deliver Alabama traffic from the 4X1B net.
- b. Take Out Of State **routine** precedence traffic from any state traffic net that might meet during the period of duty to the region 4X1B net for further relay.
- c. Check-in on state nets which meet during the period of duty.
- d. The period of duty of the 4X1B Rep shall be from the start of the 4A2B net on the day preceding the day of duty until completion of the 4X1B net on the day of duty.

D-4. 4X9B Rep Duties and Responsibilities:

- a. Pick up and deliver Alabama traffic from the 4X9B net.
- b. Take Out Of State **routine** precedence traffic from any state traffic net that might meet during the period of duty to the region 4X9B net for further relay.
- c. Check-in on state nets which meet during the period of duty.
- d. The period of duty of the 4X9B rep shall be from the completion of the 4A1B net on the day of duty until completion of all traffic delivery on the 4A2B net on the day of duty.

D-5. Traffic delivery

- a. **Incoming Traffic** - In addition to the periods of duty outlined above, the Traffic, 4X1B, and 4X9B Reps have the responsibility for delivery of any traffic received as follows:

(1). General Messages (e.g., CHNAVMARCORMARS BCST, NNNØALL'S, etc.) will normally be transmitted by both SSB and MT63 on two consecutive regularly scheduled state traffic nets following receipt. If needed, general messages may also be transmitted by AMTOR FEC.

(2). All other traffic received for delivery within the state will be brought to the next regularly scheduled traffic net following receipt. If a message cannot be delivered after two consecutive regularly scheduled nets, e-mail or U.S. mail may be used. For delivery of MARSGRAMS see paragraph B-5.d.(7) above.

b. Outgoing Traffic - Traffic, 4X1B and 4X9B Reps have the responsibility to deliver outgoing traffic received by them to the appropriate net or the WL2K system as outlined above.

(1). If the duty Traffic Representative is loaded with incoming traffic, NCS may use another member to expedite delivery of outgoing high precedence message(s).

(2). If the 4X1B or 4X9B Reps are unable to deliver their outgoing traffic to their assigned nets, other region or state traffic nets may be used; or, if they have the capability to use the WL2K system, they may enter their outgoing traffic into the WL2K system. If unable to deliver their traffic via a traffic net or the WL2K system, they must return to the next regularly scheduled Alabama traffic net and so advise the NCS who will make provisions for alternate delivery of the traffic.

D-6. NCS, ANCS and Traffic Reps Assignments

Up-to-date assignments of NCS, ANCS and Traffic Reps will be coordinated and promulgated by message by NNN0GAA THREE as necessary.

ALABAMA NET OPERATIONS GUIDE
ANNEX A

NET CONTROL STATION SCRIPT

Open the Net:

4A1B, 4A1B THIS IS (NCS), TRAFFIC REPS ONLY, OVER

*** *Take list*

(Call off list) THIS IS (NCS), ROGER, OUT

Call for Stations with Traffic:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), STATIONS WITH RECORD TRAFFIC ONLY. OVER.

*** *Take list*

(Call off list) THIS IS (NCS), ROGER, OUT.

(If no stations heard) THIS IS (NCS), NO STATIONS HEARD, OUT

Call for Additional Stations:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), OVER

*** *Take list*

(Call off list) THIS IS (NCS), ROGER, OUT.

(If no stations heard) THIS IS (NCS), NO STATIONS HEARD, OUT

Repeat call for Additional Stations:

Call for relays and net call:

(selected station) THIS IS (NCS), REPORT RELAYS AND MAKE A
NET CALL. OUT.

*** *Take list from Net Call station - -* THIS IS (NCS) ROGER, OUT.

(Call off list) THIS IS (NCS), ROGER, OUT.

Authorizing Abbreviated Call Signs:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), ABBREVIATED CALL SIGNS AUTHORIZED. OUT.

Direct routing of messages per paragraph B-5.d

Authorizing a Free Net:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), ARE THERE ADDITIONAL STATIONS OR
BUSINESS BEFORE THE FREE NET, OVER

(If response, take action as appropriate)

(If no stations heard) THIS IS (NCS), NO STATIONS HEARD, OUT

4A1B THIS IS NNN0---, THIS IS NOW A FREE NET. STATIONS MAY CLOSE
DOWN AT WILL.

(If necessary) GIVE PRIORITY TO (call) AND (call). OUT.

Last Call:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), ARE THERE ADDITIONAL STATIONS OR
BUSINESS BEFORE THE NET IS CLOSED, OVER.

(If response, take action as appropriate)

(If no response) THIS IS (NCS), NO STATION HEARD, OUT.

Securing the Net:

4A1B THIS IS (NCS), CLOSE DOWN. OUT.