

NET CONTROL OPERATOR GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are meant to assist those wishing to work as a Net Control Operator. They are by no means hard and fast rules, more like reminders of good net control operator practices. We would like you to operate a 50 watt station, 35 watts would also be OK. We would prefer not to use HT's in case power is needed to override interference or to hit the repeater solid.

You have a script to follow, a roster to call and mark on, and plenty of time to conduct the net. We run directed nets which means that you are in charge of the net and control the check ins, the round robin, and any requests for info, or breaks, or comments during the net.

1. Remember to ID every 10 minutes per FCC rules. You simply give your call sign and continue with what ever you were doing, roll call, round robin, or announcements. Encourage your listeners to end their "turn" with their call sign. You will know they are done and they will be legit if it takes more than 10 minutes to get back to them again.
2. Recognize each person who answers during roll call. If you don't say something to acknowledge them, they will assume you did not hear them. Say something like good signal, got you checked in, good to hear you, a little scratchy but readable, etc.
3. When no one answers, just go on to the next name on the list. Do not get into a habit of saying, "nothing heard" when using a repeater. This is a VHF/UHF repeater net and we don't use relays with the repeater, unlike HF nets which usually require relays and "contacts".
4. Keep calling for missed or late check ins until you hear nothing but crickets. Doubles are very common, and you can pick out maybe one or two call letters. You can always say "Last stations doubled. Please come again slowly or station with a Z come again". Then you can ask for the station that doubled with XX7XXZ to come back.
5. Put a smile in your voice! This is not a disaster or a weather/incident net. This is a good time, club sharing, information sharing net. When you have fun as an operator, so will the group and the participation will reflect that also.
6. Remember to clear the frequency and return the repeater to normal use at the end of the net.

7. HAM Radio is not social media! We do not hit the "like" button or send out unconfirmed and unreliable reports or information. If you find yourself saying things like "I heard that..." or "I think that the..." or "I am not sure, but I..." you should probably not pass it on. Instead, say something along the lines that you will check it out and get back, or does anyone on the net have the correct information. Remember this, you are entitled to your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts! We always try to pass appropriate information and/or point our listeners in the right direction to find the information.
8. Encourage questions and facilitate appropriate answers or referrals for the group. There is a lot of experience out there and a lot of new kids on the block and hooking the two together makes this hobby unique. Where else can you bridge the knowledge gap with the push of a PTT?
9. Remember to RTL! That is Release To Listen. The hardest part of the NCS position is the listening part. You are thinking of who is next, what was that call sign, did I get the name right, are we out of time.... Take a breath and let your ears work. Two ears, one mouth..... There probably is a reason for that!
10. Be yourself..... Don't worry about how others run a net or how the morning net works or the emergency net runs, do your net and own it.

Is all this too much? Maybe the first time it is a lot to have in the back of your radio mind, but it should quickly become the ground you stand on. This is such a fun and learning experience for you that your comfort zone becomes bigger and wider each time. So just enjoy it all!

This is a hobby with so many avenues that one never knows it all and you always learn something new. What a deal.

Thank you for your participation in this weekly club activity. We can tell you first hand just how important this becomes when you actually respond to or are called to a situation that involves radio communication. The more comfortable you are speaking and listening, the more effective and affective you will be on the air.

Have a good time and enjoy. Someone will always have your back should you need any help during the nets.