

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL

INSTRUCTOR'S OUTLINE & ATTACHMENTS

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Preface

by John Freeman, KB8ZDX

Amateur radio is "A radiocommunication service for the purpose of self-training, intercommunication and technical investigations carried out by amateurs, that is, duly authorized persons interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest". If you look at Part 97 of the FCC Rules and Regulations (97.3(a)(4), you will find that statement as the definition of Amateur Radio.

This Training Manual and the ones that will follow require a joint effort; yours and ours. We can only write the material, you must use them and apply what you learn in order for them to be effective or useful.

We would like to thank you for taking an interest in Amateur Radio, Public Service and in joining us in an effort to renew the "self-training" and educational portion of Amateur Radio that is so important. We all must try to become the best operators we can, and the only way that can be done is by studying and learning how to be one. If you are reading this, you are taking the first step.

Once you have completed this material, there is one more step that must be taken in order for this program to work; you must become Net Control Operators and apply what you have learned. Do not fear, no one is perfect and no one expects you to be. If you had to be perfect to run a net, how many Net Control Operators do you really think we would have? Practice makes perfect (or as close as you can get) so get with the person teaching this class, your county ARRL Emergency Coordinator, your local RACES Officer, Net Managers, club members, or whomever it is to volunteer to be a Net Control Operator for whatever kind of net there is available. Apply what you have learned and you will be better for it.

PURPOSE OF THIS OUTLINE

The purpose of this outline is to provide a learning and teaching tool to members of the Amateur Radio community pertaining to Net Control Stations and Net Control Operators

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

I. NETS DEFINED

Net: Individuals acting together to increase efficiency and effectiveness through shared information and resources.

Net Formats

- **Open** - Informal, may or may not be a Net Control Station, and non net related traffic may be passed.
- **Directed** - Formal, set of rules, Net Control Station who runs and controls net and frequency. Only net related traffic.

Net Types

- **Ragchew/Club Sponsored Net**
 - Open net, usually a formal set of instructions called "preamble" and follows a specific topic for the evening
 - Anyone may check in and discuss topic
 - Formal traffic may be passed
 - See Attachment "A" Sample Ragchew Net
- **Skywarn/Weather Net**
 - **Stand by Net** - Open net, information being gathered, and is not called a Skywarn Net at this time.
 - **Formal Net** - Directed net, only one station reporting to NWS and can be called a Skywarn Net if a warning or watch has been issued by NWS.
- **ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service)**
 - Work with served agencies (i.e. Red Cross, Salvation Army)
 - Public Service Events (i.e. parades, shows, fairs, walkathons)
 - Directed by a Net
 - ARRL appointed Emergency Coordinator may call this net

- Control Station appointed by the EC
- May use repeaters, simplex, HF
- NCS is usually located at served agency Command Post
- **RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services)**
 - Affiliated with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration)
 - Must be RACES certified to participate in the net or exercise
 - No non-RACES communications on the net
 - It is always a directed net
 - Net Control Station is usually located in EOC (Emergency Operations Center)
 - Training Nets are limited to one hour of air time per week. An exercise lasting 72 hours in duration may be done no more than twice a year (with proper approval).
- **TYPES OF RACES NETS**
 - **Stand-by:** May be an open or directed net. An excellent training tool for teaching new Net Control Operators how a net is actually conducted
 - **Incident Command System (ICS) Standby Net** Called a Resource Net and is always a directed net. Known as the "Supply Sergeant" due to directing assets, supplies, etc. for served agencies. It requires NCS to have a high level of organizational skills, a cool head and several assistants to help handle the large volume of traffic. It relieves stress and traffic from Tactical and Command Net Control Operators.
 - **Command Nets** are established during large disasters and emergencies. They are used by "Executive Board" of Emergency Officials and are not run by Amateurs, but Amateur Nets may be required to report to the Command Net.
- **ARPSC (Amateur Radio Public Service Corps)** Net are held on ARRL Section, District and Local levels. They are information nets for the passing down of information from ARRL Headquarters. They are excellent training opportunities and should be held on a weekly level

● II. Net Control Station

- **Characteristics** of a Net Control Station can be found in **Attachment "B"**

Location

- Station with a strong, commanding signal into area of operations
- Have available as many modes of communication to served agencies as possible (i.e VHF, UHF, HF, phone, CB)
- Have alternative power supplies (i.e. batteries, solar, generator)
- Have a back-up Net Control Station prearranged and ready to assume control of the Net if needed.

III. Things to Know

Being in charge. Net Control Operators are perceived as a leader and must build trust with field operators and accept the responsibility placed on them.

Choosing the net format. This must be decided by the NCO and can be changed from open to directed as NCO sees the need.

Determining Net size. Determined by the nature of the incident and needs of served agencies. Always accept more than anticipated and keep them on stand-by, but keep them informed, thank them and release them when its known that they are not needed.

Using Tactical Call Signs. Try to keep to a minimum. Use call sign suffixes since it is very familiar to all involved.

Setting Net Discipline. NCO sets the level of discipline. Describe what you want in net instructions. Keep transmissions short and only necessary information and when there is an opportunity, relax and have some fun. If someone gets out of hand or is not following procedure, NCO must lead them back through example and gentle reminders. Avoid direct confrontation and address the net as a whole when correcting errors in procedure or judgement. Try a roll-call check-in to remind net members, and yourself, to id every ten minutes.

Handling Requests to "Go Direct". These can save time and be valuable, but also can interfere with the net. Cover what you can in your net instructions. If you see the request as viable, respond with "Make your call".

Net Instructions - Using and Creating. Be specific. State what information you want passed. Sets the mood and direction of the net so be prepared to change them as conditions or situations change. Give changes in the form of updates, but repeat full instructions again

Net Instructions in Weather Nets. Be very specific about what it is that you want. Attachment "C" contains sample weather net instructions. Place your spotters and be firm about the fact that they need to remain on site and not "chase" the storm. Storm "chasing" is not a good idea and part of NCO responsibility is to the safety of all concerned.

Net Announcements. Use net announcements regularly to keep field operators aware of any changes in events or operational changes. Use them to keep them awake, aware and on frequency. Attachment "D" contains examples of what can be put in announcement format

Untrained Observer. Most commonly found during weather nets. Try to "gently" teach them through suggestions and remember to thank them. If it is a very busy net, have them stand by, but always get back to them. Try asking them about specific things you may be looking for, this will teach them what you want and need

Irate/Upset Participant. This one is tough. Try the steps in Attachment "E". Do not retaliate, this can cause you to lose the whole net.

What Call Gets Your Attention First? Routine calls should be responded to in the order received. If you hear "Priority" or "Emergency", hold all other calls and respond to the "Emergency" call first and "Priority" second. See Attachment "F" for the meaning of each level.

What is a Liaison Station and How Do You Use Them? Liaison stations are established when you may have a large net or wide spread area that you are dealing with. They are in essence the NCOs' answering service. You may assign a Liaison station to handle all traffic for a certain agency or area that is working on a separate frequency from the main net. They also act as a "garbage filter" answering all of the routine questions that are coming in. The Liaison station will relay important information to the main NCS.

What Is a Sub-Net and When Is One Needed? A Sub-Net deals with a particular function of the Net. One of the best ones to set-up is a "Resources Net". This is where all operators will check in, check out, give transportation needs, get duty assignments, give equipment lists. If the main NCS needs people or equipment, they go to the Sub-Net with their needs. If necessary, a Sub-Net may be needed beneath the original Sub-Net. The NCS for the Sub-Net notifies the Main NCS and with approval sets up the new NCS. Original NCS has become "Command" or "Main" NCS.

You Didn't Know You Knew - The ICS lights go on! The ICS and the Sub-Net system are identical except in one sense; ICS has an automatic overload prevention. The defined Chain of Command and authority is designed to split large tasks into smaller ones. Police and Fire Departments use ICS heavily and the Red Cross has it's own version of ICS. When you are

informed that you are reporting to someone else now, accept it, they have just split the responsibility. Inform your own NCS (if you have one) and keep on doing what you have been doing.

How Long Should You Stay On Duty As NCS? Take a break whenever you can. If you think you need a break, you do! Just turn it over to one of your assistants for a while. A two hour stretch without a break is maximum. A four hour shift would be considered the very maximum and if you are at it for six hours, you should be starting to self-destruct.

IV. Things You Need To Practice

Practice Copying all call signs. One of your greatest fears will be making a mistake on a call sign. To practice your "ear-to-hand" coordination, study your Morse Code. Another way is to listen to all of the nets that you can and write down the call signs as they check-in. Don't worry about getting all of them the first time. The more you talk to other operators also can help, because you will recognize those calls of the people you talk to often. Another excellent exercise is to listen to an HF Net, especially one of the Traders Nets. If you can copy 75% of the check-ins there, you are truly a master of the check-ins.

Practice Writing it down. As NCS you are going to be constantly writing information down. Once again, Nets are an excellent place to practice. Practice writing down what is being said, who said it and when, and you will develop your own brand of short hand, everyone does. If any traffic is passed on the Net, practice taking it down and in proper format, this prepares you for the first piece of official traffic you will receive as an NCS.

Practice Listening. Bad signals are everywhere in Amateur Radio, even on our best two meter repeaters. Fringe areas, an HT with a Rubber Duck (better known as a Dummy Load), decreasing battery strength, all these will be encountered as NCS. You have to practice pulling out the audio from the garbage on the signal. Listening to your favorite repeater with your radio set 5Hz off frequency is a great training exercise for "pulling them out of the mud". If you have HF, don't listen to the big booming signal, practice listening to that station that you can barely hear and see what the results are.

Practice Running Nets. Volunteer to be NCS for your local groups Rag Chew Net, ARPSC Nets, be back-up for Weather Nets, and your ARES/RACES Nets. The only way to build confidence running a net is to run one and you'll see what happens.

Practice passing NTS messages. As NCS, you must be able to pass formal NTS traffic. Send a message to anyone and everyone that you can think of, for whatever reason. Write it out in NTS format until you are dreaming the Radiogram in your sleep. The only way you can get proficient at this is if you do it.

Practice writing Net Instructions. At times you may have to do this quickly, so practice by writing them down and have yourself a set handy. Of course you cannot cover every possibility doing this, but if you write them down, you will get all the practice in the world and will be able to do it when you have to. See Attachment "C" for a sample set of Weather Net Instructions.

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "A"

RAGCHEW NET PREAMBLE

(Preamble Sample) **Good evening everyone, this is _____(your call) and my name is _____(your name) and I will be the Net Control Station this evening for the _____(Organization) Net. This net meets every _____(day) at _____(time) local time. The purpose of this net is to promote Amateur Radio activities in the local area. All amateurs are invited to participate in this net and to input their comments. This is a directed net and as always, Emergency or Priority traffic will be responded to immediately. Please address all communications to Net Control. You do not have to be a member of _____(Organization) to check-in. At this time I will take check-ins from any mobile or short time stations. Mobile or short time stations please call now.**

Copy down call-signs as they check in:KB8ZDX - Mobile, N8UT - Short-time

"OK, we have KB8ZDX Mobile, good evening John and Bruce, N8UT for a short-time. Any other mobile or short-time stations.

"Hearing no more, we will take check-ins from any stations anywhere at this time, please call."

Copy down call-signs as they check-in. If you have a hard time understanding them, do not be afraid to ask them to repeat their call-sign phonetically.

KB8YTC

N8RYA

KA8YKK

K5EKP

N8XTN

AA8IY

KC8BGK

KC8EBW

Remember to read back the call-signs and say their names if you know what it is. Address them as friends. If you do not know the name, do not be afraid to ask them, and write it down behind their call sign, then address them as such.

"Tonights topic will be _____ (your choice of topic). We'll start with John, KB8ZDX. Your comments tonight."

Remember, if you get any mobile or shorttime stations during the net, always go to your Mobile stations first and then your shorttime so that you do not miss them.

"Moving on to our regular check-ins, we'll start with Steve, KB8YTC, go ahead with your comments."

After dealing with a few check-ins, take a short standby for further check-ins.

"This is _____(Call) Net Control Station for the _____(Organization) Net. Are there any further check-ins at this time?"

Remember, any Mobile or shorttime stations receive priority to make their statements and comments since they will not be in the system for long.

"We have reached the bottom of our list and hearing no more check-ins we will make some announcements at this time."

Suggested announcements:

- Testing dates and sites (mention all within the area)
- Upcoming Hamfests
- Club meetings (not just your clubs or organizations, but others in area)
- Training sessions
- Special Events or happenings within the organization
- Any other Nets held in the area

"Are there any Officials of _____(Organization) wishing to make any other announcements at this time?"

"Hearing none I will close the net this evening. Thank You all for being here on the net. This is _____(Call) returning the repeater back to normal Amateur use."

This preamble and method of talking through a net are not engraved in stone, they are examples for you to have available. This is your training time, so write your own preamble and become a

net control on some of your local nets.*The names and call-signs used in the example are real and not just made up.

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "B"

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD NET CONTROL STATION

Good voice quality.

Sense of control and self-assured

Decisiveness and the maturity to make good judgement calls

Knowledge of band characteristics

Knowledge of common equipment

Good basic communications skills and fluent command of language

Ability to absorb new terminologies quickly

Knowledge of the ICS (Incident Command System)

Physical condition that will tolerate high stress for extended periods of time

A strong team player and organizer

Good hearing capabilities

Good listening capabilities

Good ear-to-hand copying skills

Decent (readable) penmanship

Computer keyboard skills - touch typing

Generally "professional" appearance

Willingness to take and carry out direct orders

A cast-iron stomach and constitution that can exist on cold food and hot coffee for days

The ability to sleep in a rock quarry without bedding

Consistently demonstrates above average operating techniques

Has a spouse who supports or assists in public service role

Has general understanding of all Memorandum of Understanding with served agencies

Constant concern for the safety of participants

Good sense of humor

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "C"

SAMPLE WEATHER NET INSTRUCTIONS

This is KB8ABC, and I will be acting as net control for the duration of the weather event that is current in our coverage area. This will be a directed net. All communications are to be addressed through net control. The NWS has issued a Severe thunderstorm watch for the following counties _____, _____, _____. At this time we are condition green.(yellow, red). Your check-in instructions are as follows:

When checking into the net, please give your call sign, name, location, mobile or stationary status, and how long you will be available

If you must leave the net for any reason, please notify net control

I will now take check-ins for this weather net.

"AFTER CHECK-IN

"Attention all net stations!! This is KB8ABC, net control please stand by for net instructions."

"The instructions for this net are as follows: This is a Severe Thunderstorm Watch. We expect rain, thunder and lightning, wind and low cloud formations. The following items are the only reports that net control wishes to hear from Spotters; please use only the suffix of your call when calling net control:

Report all hail . . . regardless of size.

Report only winds measured or estimated to be over 50 MPH.

Do not report lightning unless it hits a person, building, electric services or causes damage resulting in blocked roadways.

Rainfall is NOT to be reported unless accumulations threaten flash flooding.

Wall Clouds with confirmed rotation are to be reported.

Funnel clouds are to be reported.

Tornadoes are to be reported.

Thunder is not important and is not to be reported.

If you are stationary, do not move without notifying net control; unless you are in imminent danger.

If you are mobile, do not engage in Storm Chasing. Mobiles that must remain moving will please report their location to net control every 15 minutes

Do not go mobile unless it is to go to your pre-assigned stationary viewing area.

If you are in a convertible, please do not observe from inside your vehicle. Seek a shelter from which you can observe safely

All reports should follow the TEL (Time, Effect, and Location) reporting procedure.

Priority and Emergency transmissions must meet standard definitions and will be handled immediately by Net Control.

Consider your own safety at all times.

Only your direct observations are reportable. Commercial radio or TV weather reports, radar descriptions, or police and fire department transmissions that you hear on scanners, are not reportable on this net.

This concludes net instructions at this time. I will repeat the net instructions from time-to-time. Please listen carefully to the net. Instructions can change quickly with events. This is KB8ABC, standing by for Spotter reports."

Time permitting, you can take more check-ins to the net. Each time you take in a new group of Spotters, you should repeat the net instructions.

The above is only an example. Tear it apart. Modify it. Put it back together. Embellish it. The important thing is that you practice writing examples like it; so that you get used to thinking ahead about what you want from the net participants. The better your instructions are, the smoother the net will run, the more professional it will appear to the world, and the more control you will have.

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "D"

NET ANNOUNCEMENT IDEAS

Some of the things you can put into your announcements are:

Safety reminders

Frequencies of Sub-Nets and Liaison Stations

Current events regarding the emergency. Be careful not to air exact locations of casualty occurrences or the known names of casualties.

Short term weather forecasts

Encouragement and praise to the poor guys standing in the rain, etc

Shift Schedules

Eating Schedules and Food Source Locations

Short break relief rotations

Locations of restrooms available

Travel/transportation hazards

Safe/Approved travel routes

Termination/Activation of emergency sub-activities

Humorous happenings

Equipment/battery checks

Relays of personal messages from family to participant

ID sessions

NET CONTROL MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "E"

IRATE/UPSET PARTICIPANT

This is one of the toughest things you are going to face. If handled incorrectly, it can cause net participants to "take sides" and erode the morale and effectiveness of your net. People get their feelings hurt over nothing, especially when they are tired and under unusual, stressful circumstances. Your first reaction may well be to retaliate in an upset manner. This will blow the net. Here is a formula to cure the problem:

Slow up. Don't respond instantly. Take a deep breath

Do a quick personality review of your assailant.

DO THE NEXT THREE STEPS ALL IN ONE STATEMENT.

Acknowledge the problem. Give in to the "Problem". Whether they are right or wrong! This acknowledges that there is a problem and that you are recognizing that fact. It also throws them off balance. They are not expecting this. Once you agree that there is a problem, the "fight" is gone.

Empathize with them! Whether you understand or not, tell them that you can understand how they can feel that way and that under the same circumstances, you would probably feel the same way.

Ask them for a quick and simple suggestion for a solution. Listen intently! This is where they will reveal the real problem. Everything they have said up to now may have been a loud smokescreen. Somewhere in their suggestion, they will tell you what they really want from you.

If their suggestion/solution is something reasonable, tell them that you will try to put it into play. If it is not, make a counter-suggestion that will satisfy the real problem that they have revealed to you.

If the problem cannot be resolved quickly and reasonably, quietly send someone to replace this individual and relieve him from his post. If there are no posts involved in the operation, give up ... let him win . . . politely explain that the net must continue, thank the person for his services, and tell him he doesn't have to stick around. You tried to solve the problem reasonably and he refused. He wins the fight and you won the battle. The rest of the net will respect what you did and morale will remain intact.

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "F"

CALL PRECEDENCE AND DEFINITION

Emergency - Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular commercial facilities. This includes official messages of welfare agencies during emergencies requesting supplies, materials or instructions vital to relief to stricken populace in emergency areas. During normal times, it will be very rare.

Priority - This is for important messages having a specific time limit, official messages not covered in the emergency category, press dispatches and emergency-related traffic not of the utmost urgency.

Welfare - Either an inquiry as to the health and welfare of an individual in the disaster area or an advisory from the disaster area that indicates all is well. Welfare traffic is handled only after all emergency and priority traffic is cleared. Routine - Most traffic during normal times. In disaster situations, traffic should be handled last, or not at all when circuits are busy with higher-precedence traffic.

NET CONTROL TRAINING MANUAL OUTLINE

ATTACHMENT "G"

ODE TO A TOUR OF DUTY AS NCS - THE FIRST 15 MINUTES

Just for instructional fun....

by R. Bruce Winchell - N8UT

Reproduce freely

Your EC just woke you up in the middle of your favorite TV sporting event. He wants you to start an emergency net from your shack. He is at the EOC. There is a ruptured gas main in a heavily populated part of town. Other than the location, he didn't give you any more information. You head for the shack, turn on the 2 meter rig, and grab a clipboard. Your training kicks in. You begin asking yourself questions and writing down the answers.

OK, broken gas main . . . police, fire, gas company, and EM involved . . . possible evacuation . . . possible need to open shelter . . . transportation possibly needed . . . likelihood of handicapped people in the area . . . danger of asphyxiation . . . might go all night

1. What kind of net should I start?
 - A. Open?
 - B. Directed?
2. How many people am I likely to need?
3. How long do I estimate the event will last?
4. Do I need to hold some people in reserve for a shift change?
5. What agencies are likely to be involved?
 - A. Do we have special liaison people for these agencies?
6. Do I have any operators who live in the effected area?
7. Which way is the wind blowing?

8. What will be the safest route into the area?

Don't have enough information. EC said he will call back with more. Better find out what I have available right now. Pick up the mike and announce that there is an emergency situation developing. Use Open format standby net. Take check-ins. Ask two operators to go to other local repeaters and recruit people for the upcoming net. Check-ins begin coming in. Tell everyone to prepare for participation assignments. Recruit someone to come to your shack to do logging and phone calls for you.

EC calls back. Says to prepare for an all-niter. You are going to need relief shifts. Evacuation will take place. Need to activate Red Cross shelter at high school. Red Cross has been notified. Wants voice and packet for shelter. Requests 5 operators to report to staging area to do head counts on city buses being used for evacuation. Needs 2 RACES members to man 2 meter and packet stations at EOC ASAP.

Back on the air. Formalize the net. Request 2 RACES volunteers for a 4 hour shift at EOC . . . one has to be able to run packet. Recruit 2 more RACES volunteers to pick up the portable packet station stored at the clubhouse and dispatch them to the high school shelter. Recruit 5 volunteers to handle head counts and assign one of them as team leader to compile the reports. Send them into the area from the North.

Ask for volunteer RACES qualified base station close to the staging area to liaison traffic from the staging area volunteers to the Red Cross shelter on simplex so that HT's can be run on low power to conserve batteries.. Ask liaison station to relay only compiled totals to NCS.

Request a qualified NCS volunteer to set up a resource net and two shift reliefs on secondary repeater. Instruct all remaining individuals not yet assigned to a task to check-in on the resource net. 8 minutes ... not bad ...smooth as silk. Call EC and give progress report.

Can't reach EC.

8 minutes, 15 seconds: Logging volunteer shows up. . . slightly drunk.

8 minutes, 30 seconds: Your wife informs you that the toilet is plugged and she can't find the handle to the plumber's plunger. You smile. It's taped to the tower . . . holding your new wire antenna.

9 minutes: Your 6 year old tells you that there is a big fire in a warehouse across town . . . he thinks it's where you work . . . it's on TV . . . and a half mile upwind from the gas leak.

9 minutes 30 seconds: Over in the corner, under a big stack of radio catalogs, the weather alert receiver begins to screech it's tornado season.

9 minutes 50 seconds: The phone rings, your assistant drops it, hiccups loudly, passes gas, and then hands it to you . . . it's the EC. The telephone receiver is broken but you manage to

understand that the EC now wants you to set up a Skywarn sub-net and send out the Amateur TV guys to the warehouse fire. You tell the EC, "No Problem"

10 minutes 30 seconds: Hang up the broken phone and call the resource net for manpower to fill the new requests. Resource NCS says "No Problem".

11 minutes: Resource net calls back. One of the available ATV guys is on his way to the shelter as the packet operator and the other one is your hiccup afflicted logging assistant. The other ATV team is out of town on an experimental, underwater, dual satellite linked ATV Dxpediton near Easter Island . . . bunch of retired guys with too much money. You console the frustrated Resource NCS and tell him to work it out.

12 minutes 10 seconds: You call the EC and tell him there will be a bit of a delay but there is "No Problem".

12 minutes 40 seconds: You have your wife start pouring strong coffee into your assistant. Maybe he will function a little better as a wide-awake drunk?

13 minutes 5 seconds: Your pager goes off with a message from your boss telling you not to bother reporting for work in the morning.

13 minutes 8 seconds: Console wife about income loss by giving her a hug and saying, "No Problem", while patting her on the rump and trying not to lose focus.

13 minutes 20 seconds: The computer printer connected to your packet station begins spitting out paper. The packet station at the EOC is still programmed to your station from the last test you did. Fast and frantic search begins and ends. The right software for it is in your briefcase . . . at work . . . where the fire is . .

13 minutes 35 seconds: The liaison station calls on the radio to report that one of your staging area volunteers has just gone into labor . . . her water broke and ruined her shoes; and he wants to know if it is OK to let her go to the hospital.

13 minutes 55 seconds: The 16 year old kid, who took the test 10 times to get his Tech license, calls in a "priority" message on his HT, with a half-dead battery, on the rubber duck, from 15 miles out of town, to report that the wind just blew over the outhouse with grandma inside. Grandma got confused after she rolled out of the outhouse and fell in the pit. After 8 more broken transmissions, you find out that grandma is OK . . . "but she smells . . . sumthin' awful!"

Welcome to the first 15 minutes of an emergency net from inside a net control station.

Out on the resource net, there is much grumbling about going to bed . . . because *nothing is happening*.

NET CONTROL TRAINING QUIZ

1. Two Net Formats are:

- A. Open and Informal
- B. Informal and Formal
- C. Open and Directed

2. Explain THE basic difference between ARES and RACES.

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3. A Weather Net may be called a Skywarn Net if information is being gathered.

True

False

4. When should you begin using the word SKYWARN in a weather net?

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5. What is the difference between a Standby Net and a Resource Net?

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6. An ARES Net can be used at a parade or walkathon.

True

False

7. Anyone can operate during a RACES Net.

True

False

8. RACES is affiliated with:

ARRL

FCC

FEMA

MDOC

ASPCA

8. As Net Control, if you MUST send a mobile unit out to a specific area to observe weather conditions, what direction should the mobile unit usually be instructed to approach the storm from?

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9. An ICS Standby Net may:

Direct assets and supplies

Require NCS to have a cool head

Require several assistants

All of the above

10. Your neighbor's house is on fire and the fire department is there. Explain why you should not go tell the fire chief that you are available for emergency communications.

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11. A Command Net is always run by Amateur Radio Operators.

True

False

12. A characteristic of a Good Net Control Station is:

A bad attitude

Sense of control and self assured

Runs the Net their way

Has to have a feather pillow to sleep

13. A Net Control Station should have a weak signal.

True

False

14. Who can start an emergency net?

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15. Net Control Operators should never change from an Open to a Directed Net.

True

False

16. Net Control Operators should have fun with a Net if the opportunity arises.

True

False

17. Who is usually in charge of communications in a RACES event?

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18. Net Control Operators should:

Use Tactical call-signs at a minimum

Let the Net run wild

Issue Net Instructions

Answers 1 & 3 above

19. During the Search and Rescue and Damage Assessment phase of a disaster, what kind of net would be running communications for the Field Teams?

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20. You will probably encounter the "Untrained Observer" during a Tactical Net.

True

False

21. Explain how a team member should ID when they have been issued a Tactical Call.

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22. Establish a liaison station when you have a large area to cover.

True

False

23. An eight hour shift is acceptable as Net Control.

True

False

24. It is not important to write down calls when practicing to be a Net Control.

True

False

25. You have participants engaged in Search & Rescue following a Tornado. What should your instructions be to them regarding their discovery of deceased/dismembered remains?

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26. During a Disaster, who does the EC usually report to? (Who is in charge of the EC?)

The SM

The SEC

The Sheriff

The EM

The State Police

The Fire Chief

27. Bad signals can occur even on the best of repeater systems.

True

False

28. An ARPSC Net is held for ARRL Sections only.

True

False

29. What is one of the best ways to avoid having net participants engaging in "Storm Chasing"?

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30. You should provide encouragement to your field operators.

True

False

31. Relaying personal messages from operators families to them in the field is not a good idea.

True

False

32. You should always directly confront an irate operator immediately so that you don't lose control of the net.

True

False

33. Never ask an irate operator for a solution to a problem.

True

False

34. Explain the difference between Priority and Emergency Traffic, and tell which one should be answered first.

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35. During the first 15 minutes of a Net, everything will go PERFECT!!!!!!

True

False