

Basic_TFC_Handling

Another of the magical 'black arts' available to the amateur radio operator is that of traffic handling.

At the dawn of amateur radio in the early 1900's the only practical method of passing message traffic was to relay the information from the originating station thru a system of relays to the point of final destination. Thus evolved the insertion of the word relay in the name of the fledging 'Amateur Radio Relay League'.

Even today, the rather imprecise and unpredictable path of a message originated and routed by amateur radio, of necessity passes through a number of stations or relay points. The goal of the system is to make these points as few as possible, while delivering the information in a timely manner through the system.

The most important key for the novice traffic handler is to develop the skill of listening to the network to observe just how it works and when to insert oneself into the matrix. This ability to hone your skill at listening is available to all without regard to license class or frequency privilege.

Start with monitoring the various traffic and training nets within your range of reception.

(Note: Net times shown in UTC - Starting at 0600 Local time)
Propagation may *not* be favorable to your location at all times --

1100 Z	3987.5 kHz	Arkansas Phone Net
1100 Z	14300 kHz	Intercontinental Traffic Net
1200 Z	3987.5 kHz	AR ARES Training Net -- Sunday morning only
1330 Z	7285 kHz	Daytime Texas Traffic Net
1500 Z	7290 kHz	7290 Traffic Net - AM session
1600 Z	14300 kHz	Maritime Mobile Service Net
1800 Z	7290 kHz	7290 Traffic Net - PM session
2300 Z	3910 kHz	Louisiana Traffic Net
2330 Z	3987.5 kHz	AR Razorback Net
2330 Z	3873 kHz	Texas Traffic Net
===== Next Day UTC =====		
0000 Z	3925 kHz	Central States SSB Net
0030 Z	3873 kHz	Louisiana ARES Net -- Sunday night only
0030 Z	3873 kHz	Texas ARES Net -- Monday night only
0100 Z	3935 kHz	Central Gulf Coast Hurricane Net
0200 Z	14300 kHz	Pacific Seafarer's Net
0230 Z	3935 kHz	Southwest Traffic Net

These nets are directed nets, and stations may not call other stations unless checked in with Net Control and having received permission to do so.

Basic procedures will vary with each net. Most nets will read a preamble that will give information about the net. Some will check in with call sign

only; others will use in addition a name and location. At the beginning of each net there will be a call for emergency, priority, welfare or time sensitive traffic only. Most nets will call for mobile or low power stations only. There will then be a call for stations with traffic only, followed by general checkins. As the net progresses, there will be periodic calls for additional stations to check in with the net control station.

Get to know these nets and their procedures -- during the emergency is not the time to learn how to check into the net or learn the fundamentals of handling traffic. We should all be prepared to relay the information as dictated by the sender from the point of origination to the recipient at the final destination; transcribed into the message format necessary to insure that it is properly handled thru the amateur radio traffic network.