

Net Control - Suggested Procedures/Instructions

Thank you for being a volunteer net control operator. We hope that through this experience you will gain confidence using your radio equipment on the air, and, if you already have experience, that you will model appropriate net control etiquette and procedures. Below are some suggestions for making your first few net control experiences successful, and procedures for reporting the net check-ins.

1. Download the preamble from this website. Click on the “Documents” link below the picture at the top of the page. There are two preambles currently, one for the North net, and one for the South net.
2. Download the roster. The roster is a listing of all the ACS members organized alphabetically by the letters that follow the number in their call sign (called the suffix). For example, AA7XA is after N7KNK. The roster is in two formats - Adobe PDF and Excel. You should download both formats, even if you don’t have Excel on your computer.
3. Familiarize yourself with the roster. By doing this, you will have some memory of where people and call signs are on the roster.
4. Check your radio sometime before the net to make sure you are able to get to the repeater and hear it. If you can’t you will have time to make adjustments before the time of the net.
5. Go on the net at the appointed time. This is currently 7 p.m. for the North net, and 7:10 p.m. for the South net. The 10 meter net is at 7:20 p.m. All nets are currently on Tuesday evenings, except the second Tuesday of the month, which is set aside for meetings.
6. Read the preamble, but let up on the microphone button after every few sentences, and let the repeater rest for a few seconds. This also allows anyone with urgent or emergency to break in. During the net always give emergency traffic top priority.

Emergency Traffic. The station with the emergency may say “Net control I have emergency traffic.” Net control should immediately stop all check-ins and respond quickly and calmly, “Station with emergency traffic go ahead now.” Once the station has stated the emergency traffic, net control may need to ask follow up questions to answer “where is the event” and “what is needed.” If it is, for example, a medical emergency, net control may direct some other station that has checked in to call 911 and report back.

The net should be suspended during the entirety of emergency traffic and all stations should stand by on frequency unless asked to take some action, and to be available as a resource for taking some action.

7. When a station checks in, either mark the roster, or write the call sign on some paper from which you can later mark the roster. After each station that checks in, give a verbal confirmation to the operator. For example, when N7HQR checks in during the net, say “I copy N7HQR.”

8. After you have completed the net, transfer the check-in information to the Excel version of the roster on your computer. If you don't have Excel, see the note below regarding OpenOffice.

9. Once you have the information in the Excel roster, save it under the following format: YYMMDD NET NAME. For example, a South net that took place on October 16, 2012 would be saved as 121016 South Net. After you have saved the roster, please convert it to PDF. In Excel, under "Save As" you can select Adobe PDF. In OpenOffice, under "File" select "Export as PDF." Use the same name for the PDF as the Excel roster form.

10. E-mail the PDF roster to Doug Holbrook at doug@holbrooks.org. If you can't get the roster into PDF, send the Excel file. Ask for help if you need it, until you get used to the process.

*You don't have to have access to Excel to use the roster in that format. You can download OpenOffice which is free software. The address is www.openoffice.org The spreadsheet program is called "Calc" and you can use it to open the Excel roster you saved in step 2, above.