

Types of Emergency Nets

Tactical Net—The Tactical Net is the front line net employed during an incident, usually used by a single government agency to coordinate with Amateur Radio operations within their jurisdiction. There may be several tactical nets in operation for a single incident depending on the volume of traffic and number of agencies involved. Communications include traffic handling and resource recruiting.

Resource Net—For larger-scale incidents, a Resource Net is used to recruit operators and equipment in support of operations on the Tactical Nets. As an incident requires more operators or equipment, the Resource Net evolves as a check-in place for volunteers to register and receive assignments.

Command Net—As the size of an incident increases and more jurisdictions become involved in the incident, a Command Net may become necessary. This net allows the incident managers to communicate with each other to resolve inter- or intra-agency problems, particularly between cities or within larger jurisdictional areas. It is conceivable that this net could become cluttered with a high volume of traffic. It may also be necessary to create multiple command nets to promote efficiency.

Open and Closed Nets—A net may operate as an open or “free form” net, or as a closed net where a net control station (NCS) is used to control the flow of transmissions on the channel. Typically, when the amount of traffic is low or sporadic, a net control isn’t required and an open net is used. Stations merely listen before they transmit. When a net is declared a “closed” net, then *all* transmissions must be directed by the NCS.

Principles of Repeater Operation

- 1. Use minimum power.** Otherwise, especially in heavily populated areas, you run the risk of keying more than one repeater, thus causing unnecessary interference. Low power also conserves batteries.
- 2. Use simplex, whenever possible.** ARRL recommends 146.52 MHz, but it’s a good idea to have at least one other simplex channel available. Use a gain antenna at fixed locations for simplex operation.
- 3. Observe the “pause” procedure between exchanges.** When it is your turn to transmit, after the transmitting station stands by, count to two or three before pressing your transmit switch. This gives others with urgent traffic a chance to check in.
- 4. Listen much, transmit little.** Announce your presence on a repeater when you are certain of being able to assist in an emergency, and don’t tie it up with idle chatter.
- 5. Monitor your local ARES net frequency** when you are not otherwise busy.
- 6. Think before you talk.** Stick to facts, control your emotions. Remember, during an emergency is the time when you are most apt to act and speak rashly. Anyone with an inexpensive public service band receiver can monitor.
- 7. Articulate, don’t slur.** Speak close to your mike, but talk across it, not into it. Keep your voice down. In an emergency situation you may get excited and tend to shout. Talk slowly, calmly—this is the mark of an experienced communicator.