

Oregon Emergency Net
Net Operational Guidelines and Training Manual

Revision 9 March 2024 D

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Introduction

This document is intended to be a training manual for new or potential net controls and relay stations. In addition, it contains other general operating guidelines as a supplement to OEN Bylaws and as a refresher for seasoned net controls/relay stations and all other net participants.

Starting The Net:

1. The net should be started promptly at 6:00 PM on 3980 kHz. If it becomes necessary to move the frequency due to QRM or other reasons, the move should generally be made upward on the band. It may be helpful in such cases to ask a volunteer to regularly announce the new frequency on 3980 kHz.
2. It is a net policy to not accept early check-ins before the official net start time.
3. The net accepts both phone and CW check-ins. However, it should be understood that not all net controls and relays can copy CW, and that CW savvy stations may not be available.

Read Through the Preamble

1. The net preamble should be read generally in the current approved form. The words "Directed Net" mean that there is Net Control station who facilitates and directs the Net.
2. Ask for any Emergency Traffic Listings
 - a. These requests can be for either formal or informal traffic listings.
 - b. After taking the listing, Net Control should immediately ask for volunteers to take the traffic.
 - c. If there are no volunteers, tell the lister that we will keep the listing and regularly ask again for takers.
 - d. Record traffic and message listings count (formal and informal) for your net report.
 - e. If there is an extensive emergency or high priority message requests, consider dispensing with or delaying the regular roll call. During these times, net controls should regularly repeat requests for any traffic or contact listings.

6. Ask for announcements

- a. After the station with the announcement finishes, ask if there are any questions or comments.
- b. If the announcement regards information significant to the roster, such as a new silent key, try to contact the net Manager(s) to make sure they heard. If unsuccessful, write an email or contact the Manager(s) later on the air.
- c. Announcements can be counted in the "Contacts" section of your net report.

7. Ask for any Mobile Check-ins

- a. Mobile check-ins and all others are treated as just a "count" for your net report, i.e., no need to record specific number of mobiles, emergency gear, and so on. They all get lumped together for the net reports.

8. Call for Emergency Power Check-ins.

- a. Call for these check-ins in alphabetical groups, A-F, G-M, N-T, U-Z.
- b. As above, if there is a request for a contact during this section or others to follow, allow the stations to make contact and, if appropriate, move off frequency.
- c. Checkins (callsigns) should be acknowledged, individually or more typically, in groups.
- d. If band conditions require it or the Net Control/Relay Station is relatively new to the roll call process, net participants should be asked to use phonetics and make the pace slower. If necessary, the Net Control/Relay may even ask for only one check-in at a time (next station waits to check in until first station is recognized). Those handling the net are encouraged to be firm in these requests.
- e. When band conditions are good and it is a routine net, it is highly recommended to curtail unnecessary language as Net Control/Relay in order to allow the net to move along faster and make time for other conversations such as individual greetings to checkins that speak to the "Friendship" part of our mission statement. For example:
 - i. No need to take checkins or acknowledge checkins with phonetics
 - ii. No need to ask if those checking in have traffic to list
 - iii. No need to ask your relay station to make another call for checkins after you have made your call.
 - iv. Use brief words when asking for checkins, e.g., "W7HLR for the OEN looking for Emergency Power checkins, Suffixes beginning A through M ." If you are relay station, there is no need to say "W7HLR, relay station for AE7CJ, net control for the OEN. Are there any Emergency Power checkins, Suffixes beginning A through M?"

- v. No need to use the callsign of the person you are returning to, only your own callsign. FCC is only concerned with your callsign according to knowledgeable sources.
- vi. Although entirely optional, there is no need (but still optional) to ask stations not on the OEN database about their name and QTH. Currently, others are continuing to track and reports changes as well as report them during the middle parts of the month for those who want or need to keep their rosters up to date before the new rosters come out. That being said, if you hear what you suspect may be new information to all, please send a note advising the Net Manager and/or Data Base Manager.

9. Call for Late, Missed, Early, or Visitors

- a. It is highly recommended that the Net Control make the first call at the end of the preamble unless the relay is highly experienced. The Preamble breaks usually gets 20 to 40 check-ins.
- b. The request should be "W7HLR at the Preamble break looking for Late, Missed, Early, or Visitors." Avoid using the words "through the preamble break." It can be confusing in that it may contradict the word "early".
- c. Call for these check-ins in alphabetical groups, A-F, G-M, N-T, U-Z.
- d. If a Relay station has made the call for checkins, Net Control should repeat the ask after this break and all subsequent ones in case some stations did not hear the relay station.
- e. After the preamble break, calling by alphabetical groups is optional.

10. Start the regular roll call by City

- a. Simply say the City name, or "Channel Open for Albany checkins."
- b. It is not necessary for the net control or relay stations to indicate that a particular station had checked in earlier when calling a specific city or state, particularly when the net is running behind, but it can be helpful if the Net Control is using one of the automated tools and can quickly see prior checkins.
- c. Net controls are encouraged to selectively ask participants about their day, a current project, or their weather, Etc. However, this is at the discretion of the net control and his/her style, band conditions, and how busy the net is on a given night. Some of the time savings measures above are intended to make more time for this "social" interaction.
- d. Net participants who make extended or inappropriate comments should be reminded that the net is not the place for such speech. This is particularly true for political agendas, highly controversial topics, or "preaching."

11. Pause for a break to call for late, missed, or early per the established break points.
 - a. All break points should be observed.
 - b. Except as indicated above, it is general practice to let the volunteer relay stations call for late, missed, or early checkins at the breaks, but net controls can do this themselves if so desired or needed.
 - c. During the Winter months, it is suggested that the net control ask for at least one out-of-state station to help relay due to the longer “skip” distance.
 - d. When a net control or relay station is calling roll or taking checkins and asks a station to repeat their call, other relay stations should let the station make another try before providing a relay. It seems that some stations would like to “make it” on their own if possible.
 - e. Likewise, as net controls or relay stations are calling for checkins, other relay stations should wait to relay until it is clear that the station trying to check in has not been heard (say two attempts).
 - f. After the relay station concludes their calls during the breaks, net control may repeat and ask for verification of the callsigns of the late, missed, or early checkins if band conditions are poor or uncertainty exists.
 - g. Although some net controls prefer to record late missed and earlies in their location cities (the by-city roster), this is OK, but not necessary. The net only collects and reports monthly data for total number of checkins, contacts, and traffic. Use of a separate sheet for recording new calls, call sign changes, traffic, or contact requests, emergency power, late, missed, or early checkins is encouraged.
 - h. The new By-City roster has a page at the end of the regular roll with blank spaces to add checkins either by printing the pages and using a pen or using Word to type in callsigns and put “X” in the boxes in the regular roll call boxes.

12. Closing the Net

- a. Whenever possible, end the regular net by 7:15 PM but recommended not before 7:00 PM because some stations towards the end of the roll call traditionally wait until late to tune in.
- b. At the end of the net, it is advised to give each of the relay stations a final turn at catching last minute checkins.
- c. If the net control is so inclined, let participants know that you will stay after net to facilitate a “rag chew” discussion if there is interest. Begin this by asking for a list of stations that might wish to have a turn. Topics could include getting help with a technical issue, health & welfare reports, general conversation, and so on. The facilitator would pass the floor to the next participant as needed. Alternatively, the net control may ask for another station to facilitate the session, which could continue as long as the participants desire and band conditions allow.

- d. To conclude the net, read the closing statement on the by-city roster, or use your own words to thank everyone and clear the frequency.

13. Follow Up and Net Reports

- a. The number of checkins, contacts, and traffic messages collected by the net control for each net are sent to Net Management as requested at the end of each month. Software tools have been developed in Microsoft Excel and made available by Net Management that automatically count checkins and provide other advantages. Net controls can save significant time in developing their monthly net reports and taking checkins by using these tools. Users may acquire free use of the Microsoft Excel program by setting up a free Microsoft account at Office.Com. Help in using the tools is readily available from Net Management.
- b. By about the 25th of each month or as requested by the Net Managers, net controls and relay stations should provide Net Management with any proposed new calls for the roster, call sign changes, or other changes to cities or member status. Net Management will circulate the revised roster via email by the 1st of the following month, including the updated Excel files indicated above.
- c. New or existing net participants may request that their city location is added to the roll call roster using a different city name than their FCC record or post office city indicates if that different city name better reflects where they physically live. However, Net Management may decline such requests if they are not consistent with the intent of specifying actual physical location.
- d. By the 5th of each new month, net controls should provide Net Management with the total count for checkins, contracts, and traffic for the previous month. The OEN Webmaster should post the report on the W7OEN.NET website.

Announcements & Reminders:

1. On a regular basis, please remind checkins to use the break periods for late, missed, or early instead of interrupting the rollcall in order to minimize disruption, but add, "Unless necessary". Most all of us will occasionally have an urgent reason to break during roll call, check in and leave.
2. New relay stations and net controls are usually a bit nervous unless they have previous experience. It can be quite discouraging if there are negative or sarcastic comments. Make your suggestions constructive and provide encouragement. Slow down, use phonetics, and be patient.
3. Along the same line, criticism should be tempered and handled privately in most all cases.
4. Occasionally, encourage nonmembers to request membership and get a nice certificate. Explain membership requirements and how to request a certificate. See

more on the W7OEN.NET website or ask any net control for help. “Make yourself official.”

5. Encourage participants who think they might be interested in becoming a net control to begin by picking a net night and simply writing down some or all of the calls who check in. This is one of the most challenging parts for new net controls, and the practice really helps. Secondly, suggest that they consider volunteering to be a relay station on a particular night. The regular relay stations will understand what you are doing, and they will not be offended. Or, for a more “bite sized” approach, ask a particular station to help relay for the next break, or perhaps just call the next city for you. When ready, the participant should contact Net Management to schedule additional discussion or an actual net control assignment, even if it is for just one night, once a month, or semi-permanent.
6. Likewise, when board or other net positions are opening up, provide the requirements and encourage people to stand for election or nominate others.
7. If there are special events, elections, or other important happenings, net controls should repeat these each night of the week, multiple times during the net, or as needed to help everyone get the information.

Net Operations During Emergencies

1. The net will generally operate in a normal manner during emergency events, but the net controls may elect to dispense with the regular role call if traffic and message volume is particularly high. Net controls would maintain a list of messages to be passed and seek takers for the traffic.
2. Assuming that as in the past many amateurs will monitor and come to 3980 kHz during such events, those looking to pass traffic or messages over the course of a 24-hour period may be expected to pass or take messages without the presence of a net control. It is highly recommended that volunteer net controls step in for extended periods of coverage if message volume or other related activity is moderate or high. Past experience says that without a net control chaos results and effectiveness goes out the window. Contact information for net controls, net officers, alternates, and relay stations is listed on the OEN website, W7OEN.Net.
3. If message volume and activity is high, it is recommended that those involved in the message transfer are asked to move off the net frequency, preferably up-band to 3985 kHz and above.
4. If message traffic cannot be handled on the Net frequency, here are some referrals to other nets that can be made. Coordination with other nets is encouraged.
 - a. WARTS Net, 3975 kHz, 5:30 PM
 - b. Beaver State Net, 3920 kHz, 5:30 PM
 - c. Golden Bear Net, 3975 kHz, 7:00 PM

- d. Columbia Basin Net, 3960 kHz, 6:00 PM
 - e. Noon Time Net, 3970 kHz, 11:30 AM, & 7284 kHz, 9:30 AM
 - f. ARES, 3964 kHz
 - g. Region 7 Traffic Net, 3925 kHz, 9:30 AM & 3:00 PM
 - h. Various 2 Meter Linked Repeater Frequencies:
 - i. <https://kc7nyr.com/amateur-radio/nts/>
 - ii. [Home | Northwest Oregon Traffic and Training Net](#)
5. It is the policy of the net to handle both formal and informal traffic messages including health and welfare checks. Net controls and others are encouraged to attempt help regardless of the format presented.
6. Net Controls should keep a simple log of emergency traffic details (who, what, when). Alternatively, they may just track the number of traffic messages, formal and informal for their net reports.