

Start: 1944 L – Stop: 1955 L

NET CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

1.1 OVERVIEW.

Thank-you Bob. Good evening to the net. Tonight, I'll be discussing ACS/ARES® Net Check-in procedures.

1.2 NET CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

The Net Control scripts used by Pinellas ACS include instructions for net participants to use when checking into the net. The procedures that net participants should use are also documented in the *Pinellas County ACS/ARES® Emergency Communications and Standard Operating Procedures* Document. The two items I want to talk about this evening are the phonetic alphabet and the data set requested by the Net control station.

1.2.1 Phonetic Alphabet

The international phonetic alphabet is used to ensure that Net Control and Alternate Net Control stations accurately record the call sign of each unit as they check into the net. Now I know that it is common practice for many of us to make-up a phonetic alphabet, especially as a memory aid for call signs. However, when working in an ACS/ARES® net, only the international phonetic alphabet should be used. During an activation event, ACS/ARES® will interact with other organizations. The use of a standard set of phonetics will ensure that information is passed without error. Furthermore, when propagation conditions are poor, the use of a non-standard phonetic alphabet could result in the call sign or message data being misinterpreted. I know for me, when I hear a non-standard phonetic being used while I'm recording a call sign, I stumble trying to interpret the phonetics' meaning and fall behind recording the remainder of the call.

1.2.2 Data Set Requested by Net Control

Each net control script used by Pinellas ACS includes a request for specific data to be provided to the Net Control Station by each station checking into the net. Most of us have been checking into nets for so long that we may not pay close attention to what information is being requested. However, since one of the objectives of our weekly nets, drills, and exercises is to practice the procedures we'll need to implement during an activation event, I strongly encourage everyone to carefully listen to the information requested by the net control station and then provide that information when checking in.

I'm now going to walk through the check-in procedures first for our current net and then the procedures used during an activation event when the ACS Tactical-Resource net is being established. In each case, I'll start by reading the segment of the NCS script that specifically identifies the data set being requested by the NCS. Next, I'll present several examples of expected net check-in calls that should be used by each net participant.

1.2.3 The Pinellas County ACS-ARES® and SKYWARN Training and Information net

So, let's start with the Pinellas County ACS/ARES® and SKYWARN training and information net. I'm now going to read the segment of the NCS script that requests a data set from net participants:

"This is (Call sign). I will now take check-ins for the net. When checking into the net, provide Net Control with your call sign and traffic list. Please speak slowly, clearly, and phonetically. Also, please call one at a time and wait for Net Control to acknowledge each station before a new station attempts to check-in."

I have two examples for proper check-ins. In the first example, the station checking into the net does not have any traffic. In the second example, the station has a single priority message. Please note that I will release the PTT and pause for 2 seconds during the early part of the check-in. This is done to help prevent multiple stations from doubling. If you release the PTT and hear someone attempting to check-in, you can wait for them to check-in and then try again.

EXAMPLES: (1) "THIS IS (release PTT and pause for 2 seconds) WHISKEY ALPHA ONE ROMEO YANKEE QUEBEC, NO TRAFFIC, OVER".

(2) "THIS IS (release PTT and pause for 2 seconds) WHISKEY ALPHA ONE ROMEO YANKEE QUEBEC, ONE PRIORITY, OVER".

1.2.4 Tactical-Resource Net

Next, I'll address the check-in procedure for the Tactical-Resource net. As a reminder, the ACS Tactical-Resource net will be activated when an official of ACS/ARES® is notified by a served agency partner, WCF ARES® leadership, or the Pinellas County Department of Emergency Management that a need for assistance is imminent or immediate. I'm now going to read the segment of the NCS script that requests a data set from net participants:

"This is (Call sign). I will now take check-ins for the net. When checking into the net, please provide Net Control with your call sign, tactical call sign, deployment status, and traffic list. Please speak slowly, clearly, and phonetically. Also, please call one at a time and wait for Net Control to acknowledge each station before a new station attempts to check in."

I have two examples for checking into the Tactical-Resource net. In the first example, the unit is currently deployed, has been assigned a Tactical Call sign, but does not have any pending traffic.

EXAMPLE: (1) "THIS IS (release PTT and pause for 2 seconds) WHISKEY ALPHA ONE ROMEO YANKEE QUEBEC, TACTICAL CALL SIGN IS BOCA CIEGA HIGH, CURRENTLY DEPLOYED, NO TRAFFIC, OVER".

In the next example, the station checking into the net is not currently deployed but is available for deployment. The station has not been assigned a tactical call sign and has one priority message pending.

EXAMPLE: (2) "THIS IS (release PTT and pause for 2 seconds) WHISKEY ALPHA ONE ROMEO YANKEE QUEBEC, AVAILABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT, ONE PRIORITY, OVER".

Other examples might include stations that are not available for deployment and stations that have several messages of varying precedence.

1.3 QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS.

I'd like to pause here for a minute and ask if anyone has a comment or question about tonight's presentation. If you have a comment or question, please provide me with your call sign, slowly, clearly, and phonetically so I don't make a mistake when I respond. And then ask your question or provide me with your comment.

This is WA1RYQ.

ACTION - PAUSING FOR QUESTIONS

1.4 CONCLUSION.

That's all I have for this week's training session. Let me conclude with a couple of reminders.

1. The next Winlink Training net is scheduled for this Wednesday, February 16th, at 1930 hours local. This will be a mixed voice and data net with the voice segment taking place on the W4ACS repeater. A Winlink bulletin describing the planned net activities has already been sent to all registered Winlink net participants. A copy of the detailed bulletin has also been posted on the Pinellas ACS Website.
2. A simplex training drill is scheduled for next Thursday February 24th at 1930 hours local. Detailed instructions for the drill will be presented during next Tuesday's training net and will also be posted on the PACS website early next week. During the drill, participants will be requested to use emergency power, if available, and to reduce their transmit power level to 5-watts. The membership can refamiliarize themselves with simplex net operations by reviewing the appropriate section of the *Pinellas County ACS/ARES® Emergency Communications and Standard Operating Procedures* Document. This document is available on the PACS website.

3. The ARRL held its annual convention in Orlando last Thursday February 10th. For those of you who are interested, the presentations that were used during the Emergency Communications track are now available on-line. A link to the presentations is on the home page of the PACS website.

4. I strongly encourage everyone to provide comments and suggestions for future training activities. I can be contacted at WA1RYQ@ARRL.net.

Now with that, I'll turn it back to Net Control.

1.5 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

The following table contains a summary of the comments and questions provided by the membership during the presentation.

| No. | Call Sign | Comments | Response |
|-----|-----------|---------------------------------|----------|
| | | No Questions or comments | |
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