

ARMY MILITARY AUXILIARY RADIO SYSTEM
CALIFORNIA – NEVADA

STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE

SOP CA-NV-15-2 (INFORMATION GATHERING AND REPORTING) – 1 NOV 2015

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish responsibilities and procedures for gathering real-world situational awareness information and reporting it to higher headquarters of the Army Military Auxiliary Radio System (AMARS) organization.
2. **APPLICABILITY:** These procedures apply to all AMARS members and networks in California and Nevada (CA/NV).
3. **SCOPE:** This Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) will be followed in responding to any Request for Information (RI) from higher AMARS headquarters.
4. **REFERENCES:**

AM 3 – AMARS National Operations Plan

AM 2-310 – Army MARS Message and Report Forms

County Status Message Specification

5. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - a. **STATE DIRECTOR:** Provide overall guidance. Review and approve SOP and Appendices. Ensure training is conducted.
 - b. **STATE OPERATIONS OFFICER:** Designate and schedule Reports Officers. Monitor and evaluate performance of SOP execution.
 - c. **STATE PLANS OFFICER:** Draft and submit initial SOP and Appendices. Update SOP and Appendices every twelve months or as directed by the State Director. Assist State Training Officer in developing and delivering training and exercises related to this SOP.
 - d. **STATE TRAINING OFFICER:** Plan, schedule and deliver training to members, initially and every six months thereafter. Plan and execute an initial training exercise and annual refresher training exercises of this SOP.
 - e. **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:**

- i. Familiarize themselves with this SOP and Appendices, and make ready to assume the duties of Report Officer at any time.
 - ii. Gather information from external sources by contact with Amateur Radio stations, mass media monitoring, other off-air monitoring and telephone or other direct contact with information sources as real or simulated conditions permit.
 - iii. Forward gathered information in concise and appropriate format to the on-duty Reports Officer via AMARS channels.
 - iv. If unable or unwilling to perform the duties of Reports Officer as described in (f) below for a period of at least two hours, and if assigned as Reports Officer by the State Operations Officer or Net Control, immediately advise the assigning officer that your station “can’t comply” so another station can be assigned instead.
 - v. Provide any constructive feedback to the State Plans Officer and the State Director regarding the design of this SOP.
- f. REPORTS OFFICER: This SOP creates the functional role of Reports Officer, a temporary assignment which may be made in the course of network operations to any CA/NV AMARS member willing and capable to perform the following:
- i. Acknowledge assignment as Report Officers (RO) from the State Operations Officer or Net Control on net A9A.
 - ii. Notify Net Control on net A9A when assuming RO duty.
 - iii. Report status of activates to Net Control on net A9A hourly, including:
 - 1. List of reports due to be submitted in the following hour;
 - 2. List of data items still required for reports to be submitted in the following hour (locations should be identified by FIPS, ICAO or other approved codes only and should not be described in plain language); and,
 - 3. List of reports to be submitted in the future but not in the coming hour.
 - iv. Accept items of information from other stations via net A9A.
 - v. Compile items of information into properly formatted Response to Request for Information (RRI), WXOBS, County Status or

GENADMIN messages in accordance with instructions received from higher headquarters.

- vi. Transmit the above report messages timely to arrive at their destination by the Last Time Information of Value (LTIOV) date-time or in accordance with any other instructions received from higher headquarters.
- vii. Prior to ending a shift of duty as RO, identify and make contact with the station assuming RO duty next, and make sure the oncoming RO has, or if necessary provide the relieving RO with, the following information:
 - 1. List of reports due to be submitted in the following hour;
 - 2. Current partial drafts of reports to be submitted in the following hour, containing all information compiled so far;
 - 3. List of reports to be submitted in the future but not in the coming hour.
 - 4. Copies of all Operation Orders (OPORDs), RIs, and any other message traffic that specifies current or future reporting requirements.
- viii. Before being relieved from RO duty, contact Net Control on net A9A and advise:
 - 1. That the station is securing from Reports Officer duty;
 - 2. The station that will be assuming Reports Officer Duty;
 - 3. That the station assuming Reports Officer duty has been briefed as provided in (vii), above.
- g. HOLDING REPORTS OFFICER: During periods of Sustained Network Operations (SNOP) the A9A net may close down for some periods. In order to ensure continuity of operations, the closing NCS will assign a station as Holding Reports Officer (HRO), who will:
 - i. Prior to net closing, contact the previous RO and obtain the following information (same as an ordinary RO-to-RO handoff):
 - 1. List of reports due to be submitted at a later time;
 - 2. Current partial drafts of reports to be submitted in the following hour, containing all information compiled so far;

3. Copies of all Operation Orders (OPORDs), RIs, and any other message traffic that specifies current or future reporting requirements.
 - ii. Check into net A9A when it reactivates and pass the above information to the oncoming RO.
- h. NET CONTROL, NET A9A
 - i. Upon assuming Net Control, refer to published schedules or make a net call as necessary to determine if a Reports Officer is already on duty.
 - ii. If no Reports Officer is on duty but one is scheduled, contact that station and direct it to assume Reports Officer duty.
 - iii. If no Reports Officer is on duty and none is scheduled, or if the scheduled station is unreachable, assign another willing and capable station to assume Reports Officer duty and provide that station with any available report tasking messages.
 - iv. Route all RI messages or other Operations Orders (OPORDs) requiring information gathering and reporting to the duty RO.
 - v. Direct stations to gather and report back information needed for reports by appropriate means, such as contact with Amateur Radio stations, monitoring of information broadcasts, etc.
 - vi. Route all station reports of information relevant to pending reports to the Reports Officer by voice or data. Sensitive information such as casualty information will be handled digitally and encrypted. Locations identified by FIPS or ICAO codes will not be described in plain language.
 - vii. Route reports from the Reports Officer to a Minor Relay or other station capable of forwarding the report to its destination. Reports will be encrypted and transmitted digitally in ACP-127 CODRESS format, with the message body in the format specified in the original RI or OPORD.
 - viii. Upon notification that the Reports Officer is securing, contact the oncoming Reports Officer, direct the oncoming RO to assume RO duty, and ensure the oncoming Reports Officer is in receipt of all necessary information per (f.vii) above.
 - ix. If the A9A net will be closed for a period of time, identify a Holding RO (as described in 5.g., above) who will hold all pending RIs, RRIs

and other reporting obligations, check into the net when it reactivates and pass that information to the initial RO on the re-convening net.

6. REVISIONS: This SOP supersedes all previous information gathering and reporting plans and procedures for CA-NV MARS.
7. PROCEDURES:
 - a. PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: The State Plans Officer (S5) will be responsible for development and maintenance of this SOP.
 - b. EXECUTION:
 - i. The State Director, on receipt of a Warning Order (WARNORD) or other message forecasting a requirement for information gathering and reporting, will direct the State Operations Officer to prepare a schedule of Reports Officers for the anticipated operational period.
 - ii. If the State Director is unavailable the State Deputy Director will task the State Operations Officer as above.
 - iii. The State Operations Officer (S3) will, on direction from the State Director or State Deputy Director, canvas member stations and prepare a schedule of capable and willing Reports Officers (ROs) to cover the expected operational period.
 - iv. If the State Operations Officer is unavailable to perform the duties described in (ii) above, the State Director or State Deputy Director may assign an Acting State Operations Officer to perform those duties.
 - v. The State Operations Officer or Acting State Operations Officer will, upon activation of net A9A, provide the Net Control Station (NCS) with the schedule of Reports Officers.
 - vi. Upon assuming Net Control the A9A NCS will contact the scheduled RO and direct that station, or some other station if necessary, to assume RO duty.
 - vii. On receipt of OPORDs, RIs or other messages tasking CA/NV AMARS with reporting activities, the State Director or Deputy State Director will forward those taskings via net A9A to the duty RO. The forwarded messages may be excerpts of the message received by the State Director or State Deputy Director with

sections not relevant to CA/NV removed and/or with CA/NV-specific instructions added.

- viii. Prior to conclusion of an exercise or operation, when closing down the net for a rest period, the NCS will assign a Holding RO and direct the duty RO to obtain all the ongoing information (per section 5.g. above) to the Holding RO to pass to the oncoming net RO when the net reconvenes.
- ix. The duty RO will:
 - 1. Accept detail reports from member stations and incorporate them into required reports;
 - 2. Prepare and submit required reports in the proper format, not later than 30 minutes prior to any designated Last Time Information Is Of Value (LTIOV) or other deadline for that report;
 - 3. Make an hourly reports-status report to NCS by voice listing pending reports and information-gathering requirements; and,
 - 4. Perform an orderly transition to the relieving RO or Holding RO per (5.f.) and (5.g.) above.
- x. The NCS for net A9A, in consultation with the duty RO, will task member stations to leave the net for specified periods of time to gather information for reports as needed, and will track those stations' status and expected times of return to the net.
- xi. Member stations tasked by NCS, either individually or by a general tasking to all stations, will attempt to obtain the required information as instructed by NCS and will report back to the net as instructed.
- xii. On instruction from NCS member stations will contact the duty RO and transfer gathered information. The format of this transfer will be concise and appropriate to the format of the report being prepared; for example, in the case of an individual County Report the information will be transferred using the fields and values specified for that report type.
- xiii. Member stations will normally transmit collected information to the RO in digital form and encrypted. In the interest of efficiency NCS may authorize stations to transfer collected information to the RO by voice; however, Personally Identifying Information (PII)

and other sensitive information will always be transmitted digitally in encrypted form.

- c. INFORMATION GATHERING PROCEDURE: In order to balance the need for collaboration with non-member entities with the requirements of Operational Security:
 - i. DURING AN EXERCISE:
 - 1. When contacting Amateur Radio operators or other non-AMARS sources by any means, members will politely request the required information with the explanation that they are making a simulated request for information “as part of a MARS exercise.”
 - 2. Members will NOT transmit their AMARS callsigns in on Amateur Radio frequencies or provide any other identifying information that would enable a listener to associate their Amateur callsign with an AMARS callsign.
 - ii. IN AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY:
 - 1. When contacting Amateur Radio operators on air, or contacting other non-AMARS sources by any means, members will politely request the required information with the explanation that they are requesting information “as part of a MARS response operation.”
 - 2. Members will NOT transmit their AMARS callsigns in on Amateur Radio frequencies or provide any other identifying information that would enable a listener to associate their Amateur callsign with an AMARS callsign.

8. SECURITY

- a. This SOP is Unclassified.

- 9. IMPROVEMENTS: Suggested corrections or changes to this SOP should be submitted to the State Plans Officer. Any changes will be made by the State Plans Officer and approved and distributed by the State Director.

Approved,

Date _____

STATE DIRECTOR, CA-NV AMARS