

NET OPERATIONS GUIDE

Southwest Colorado Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net

This guide is written for all amateur radio operators participating in the Southwest Colorado ARES Net. It's designed to aid operators who may have never checked in to a radio net and for the experienced operator as an explanation of how the net is run.

ABOUT THE NET

The Southwest Colorado ARES Net is primarily for the members of the Colorado ARES Region 7 team. All members are encouraged to join the Net every Wednesday at 1930 local time. The Net will serve as a place to test emergency communications readiness, for training, and the sharing of information. ARES and EmComm stations outside of the Southwest Colorado ARES region are invited to participate in the net along with any other amateur radio operator with an interest in emergency communications.

ABOUT THE REPEATERS

The Net is held on the San Juan Connection repeater system. Information about the repeaters, such as frequencies and locations, is found on the Internet at <http://www.sjcham.com/frequencies.html> and as an addendum to this guide.

The 20-plus linked repeater system provides wide-area coverage in the Four Corners area and nearly all of the Southwest Colorado ARES region. When transmitting into a linked repeater you must wait a couple seconds from the time you key the microphone until you begin talking. This delay allows the repeaters to connect to one another so your entire message is heard across the system. If you key your microphone and begin talking immediately the first syllable or two of your transmission will not be heard by other stations.

One more detail about working with the San Juan Connection repeaters is that when a station unkeys their microphone a few beeps will be heard— typically two in succession and then another three. Before any station transmits the operator should wait for the beeps to stop.

NET PROTOCOL

The Net operates as a directed net. Meaning that all stations will communicate directly with Net Control and only transmit when called upon. As is the case with all amateur radio nets, the exception to this rule is when a station has emergency or priority traffic. The Net will suspend for any such traffic and handle it accordingly.

The Net is conducted in an orderly fashion with a script for the Net Control operator to follow and a log to record the check-ins and stations with traffic. The Net Script and Net Log are addendums to this guide.

Starting promptly at 1930 the Net Control will read the preamble from the script followed by check-ins from ARES members. Due to the number of ARES member stations, the Net Control operator will call for check-ins by suffix group - which is the first letter after the number in your callsign. By limiting the number of stations calling at once there will be a reduced chance for stations transmitting at the same time. At least that holds true in theory.

Suffix groups are Alpha through Golf -- Hotel through Mike -- November through Sierra -- Tango through Zulu. For example, if your callsign is AA0ZZ you would check-in when Net Control calls for

stations in suffix group Tango through Zulu. Listen carefully for your suffix group and don't assume that the same order of groups will be called every week.

All stations that are not Southwest Colorado ARES member stations will be called by suffix group Alpha through Zulu or, in other words, all suffixes.

STATION CHECK-IN FORMAT

After reading the preamble, Net Control will ask all stations – by groups – to check-in with information in the following order:

- Your callsign, using ITU phonetics
- Your first name
- Your county (and your state if outside of Colorado) and then
- Your callsign, without using ITU phonetics

The Net Control operator may ask for other information such as the repeater you are using or not ask for some information, such as your name or county. Listen carefully to what information the Net Control operator asks for when the call for stations to check-in begins.

ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET

A	ALPHA		J	JULIETT		S	SIERRA
B	BRAVO		K	KILO		T	TANGO
C	CHARLIE		L	LIMA		U	UNIFORM
D	DELTA		M	MIKE		V	VICTOR
E	ECHO		N	NOVEMBER		W	WHISKEY
F	FOXTROT		O	OSCAR		X	X-RAY
G	GOLF		P	PAPA		Y	YANKEE
H	HOTEL		Q	QUEBEC		Z	ZULU
I	INDIA		R	ROMEO			

As an example, station AA0ZZ would check-in by saying “Alpha Alpha Zero Zulu Zulu, Craig, San Juan, AAzeroZZ.”

TRAFFIC HANDLING

Many operators checking into amateur radio nets will say “no traffic” at the end of their transmission. If you are a frequent participant on nets this refrain is heard more often than a station with actual traffic. So here at the Southwest Colorado ARES Net, in the interest of brevity, we ask that stations do not say “no traffic” at the end of their check-in.

However, the Net will accept traffic from stations and handle it in the following order: Emergency, Priority, Business, Informal, and Formal.

When a station calls with Emergency or Priority traffic this is likely due to an event not related to the Net and requires an immediate response from Net Control to assist the calling station. The Net will immediately suspend for such calls.

The other three types of traffic are generally routine in nature and defined as follows:

- *Business* is information or announcements pertinent to the audience and purpose of the Net.
- *Informal* is one station wishing to talk to another station on the Net.
- *Formal* is traffic destined for the National Traffic System.

Any station with traffic will say “Business”, “Informal”, or “Formal” at the end of their check-in. Net Control will acknowledge the station with traffic. After Net check-ins are complete and business traffic originating from Net Control has been read the Net Control operator will call back stations with traffic in the order listed above.

Stations with *Business* should be prepared to transmit their information or announcement as succinctly as possible. Best to have this written up before the start of the Net.

Stations with *Informal* traffic when called back by Net Control will state the callsign of the station they wish to contact. Net Control will then call that station and arrange for both stations to contact one another after the Net is closed.

Stations with *Formal* traffic are those with a filled out Radiogram that is to be brought to the Colorado Traffic Net (CTN) for processing. Net Control operators are qualified as National Traffic System (NTS) Net Liaison stations. Net stations will be released before Formal traffic is handled.

The sending station will transmit their Radiogram, Net Control will copy it and will then check-in to the CTN as soon as possible to transfer the message for relay to its recipient. The CTN meet every day at 1900 on the Colorado Connection repeater system.

There will be occasions where Net Control, acting as the NTS Net Liaison, has a Radiogram received on the CTN which is destined for someone in southwest Colorado. All stations should be ready with a Radiogram near their radio operating position. A blank Radiogram is an addendum to this guide. More information about the Colorado Traffic Net is at this link: <https://k0nts.org/>

BEING A NET CONTROL OPERATOR

Acting as a Net Control operator in the Amateur Radio Emergency Service is an important role that, eventually, everyone will be asked to do. The initial Incident Command System (ICS) and Basic EmComm courses required of all Colorado ARES members is the basis for communicating with brevity, purpose, and control. The radio net is where we practice what was learned in those courses.

The Net Script makes it easy for any Net Control operator to conduct the Net without having to put too much thought into the words that need to be said. Instead, the Net Control operator can concentrate on listening to the stations responding to the call.

There's more to just reading and listening when a Net Control is conducting the Net. A record of stations checking in is made on a Net Log form. Special attention is paid to stations with traffic for the Net. Announcements or other information given by a station is also entered into the Net Log form. And, on occasion, a station may have a Radiogram destined for the NTS which will need to be copied down on a Radiogram form.

When emergency or priority traffic is called out by a station during the Net that's when the training and experience at being a Net Control operator pays off. Those calls for help do come in and we will be prepared for it.

IN CLOSING

This guide will definitely be amended as we grow as an ARES team and come up with new ways and ideas to become better radio operators in the world of emergency communications.

The <https://swcoloradoares.org/> webpage is where all resources are stored for team members and anyone else interested in how our team is doing emergency communications.

Addendums follow this page.

SAN JUAN CONNECTION

Frequencies

Nearest City/Town	Site Name	Frequency	PL Tone
Mancos, CO	Caviness Hub	442.375 +	100.0
Mancos, CO	Caviness	145.325 -	100.0
Cortez, CO	Goodman	145.190 -	100.0
Dolores, CO	Escalante	448.100 -	100.0
Durango, CO Temp off air	Smelter	147.135 +	100.0
Hesperus, CO	Hesperus	145.370 -	100.0
Bayfield, CO	Spring Creek	147.150 +	100.0
Pagosa Springs, CO	Oakbrush	146.610 -	123.0
Lake City, CO	Hill 71	147.135 +	123.0
Silverton, CO	Kendall Mtn	147.375 +	156.7
Silverton, CO	Hazelton	444.000 +	67.0
Eureka, CO	Buffalo Boy	145.325 -	127.3
Animas Forks, CO	Engineer Pass	147.270 +	127.3
Telluride, CO	Telluride	146.400 S	100.0
Nucla/Montrose, CO	Raspberry	448.825 -	100.0
Monticello, UT	Abajo Peak	447.275 -	100.0
Farmington, NM	Farmington	146.760 -	100.0
Farmington, NM	Farmington	447.450 -	107.2
Farmington, NM	College Hill	147.000 +	100.0
Cedar Hill, NM	Tank Mountain	146.880 -	100.0
Aztec, NM	Hottel Hill	146.610 -	100.0
Bloomfield, NM	Harris Mesa	147.100 +	100.0
Navajo Lake, NM	Navajo Dam	147.360 +	100.0
Shiprock, NM	Roof Butte AZ	145.250 -	100.0

Southwest Colorado ARES Net Script

This is [CALLSIGN] opening the Southwest Colorado Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net. My name is [NAME] in [COUNTY NAME] county.

The net meets every Wednesday at 1930 Mountain Time on the San Juan Connection repeater system for the purpose of testing emergency communications readiness, training, and information sharing.

This is a directed net open to all amateur radio stations. The net will suspend for emergency or priority traffic. All traffic for the net is to be directed through Net Control.

[BREAK]

The net check-in order is Southwest Colorado ARES stations first and they will be called for by suffix groups. Then, ARES or EmComm stations outside of the region followed by any amateur radio stations.

All stations, when checking in say:

- Your callsign, using ITU phonetics
- Your first name
- Your county (and your state if outside of Colorado) and then
- Your callsign, without using ITU phonetics

If a station has traffic say the type of traffic at the end of your check-in. Those types are business, informal, and formal. Net Control will call those stations with traffic after check-ins have been taken. There is no need to say "no traffic" when checking in.

[BREAK]

This is [CALLSIGN] Net Control for the Southwest Colorado Amateur Radio Emergency Service Net.

Starting check-ins with Southwest Colorado ARES member stations in suffix group.....

Alpha through Golf -- Hotel through Mike -- November through Sierra -- Tango through Zulu --
Alpha through Zulu.....check-in now.

Next is ARES or EmComm stations outside of the region, all suffixes, check-in now.

Any other station wishing to check-in to the Southwest Colorado ARES Net check-in now.

Any Southwest Colorado ARES member station not acknowledged check-in now.

Net Control has business for the net. [Proceed with information]

Stations with business for the net are [LIST CALLSIGNS]. [FIRST STATION CALLSIGN] go ahead with your traffic. [Then continue with other stations]

Stations with informal traffic are [CALLING STATION(S)] and [CALLED STATION(S)]. [CALLED STATION] acknowledge and call [CALLING STATION] after the net is closed.

[If there is formal NTS traffic.....] Thank you to all participating stations joining the Southwest Colorado ARES Net. All stations are released and Net Control will now take formal NTS traffic from [CALLSIGN], go ahead with your traffic. [After traffic is handled close the net.]

Does any station have comments or questions before I close the net? [Wait a few seconds,,,if nothing heard, then.....]

Thanks to all participating stations and to the owners of the San Juan Connection for the use of their repeaters. Information about Southwest Colorado ARES is at our website swcoloradoares.org. The Southwest Colorado ARES Net is now closed.

This is [CALLSIGN] clear.

Updated August 26, 2026

Southwest Colorado ARES Net Log

DATE:	TIME:	NCS CALLSIGN:
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CHECK-IN LOG							
#	CALLSIGN	R7	B	F	I	W/CALL	NOTES/COMMENTS
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
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21							
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24							
25							
26							
27							
28							
29							
30							

NET BUSINESS	
CALLSIGN	SUMMARY

TIME NET CLOSED:

PREPARED BY:

R7 = SW CO ARES Member B = Business F = Formal I = Informal W/CALL = Other Informal Station



THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE
RADIOGRAM
VIA AMATEUR RADIO



NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
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TO

THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT

AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

FROM	DATE	TIME	TO	DATE	TIME
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REC'D

SENT

THIS MESSAGE WAS HANDLED FREE OF CHARGE BY A LICENSED AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR, WHOSE ADDRESS IS SHOWN IN THE BOX AT RIGHT ABOVE. AS SUCH MESSAGES ARE HANDLED SOLELY FOR THE PLEASURE OF OPERATING, NO COMPENSATION CAN BE ACCEPTED BY A "HAM" OPERATOR. A RETURN MESSAGE MAY BE FILED WITH THE "HAM" DELIVERING THIS MESSAGE TO YOU. FURTHER INFORMATION ON AMATEUR RADIO MAY BE OBTAINED FROM ARRL HEADQUARTERS, 225 MAIN STREET, NEWINGTON, CT 06111

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THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE
RADIOGRAM
VIA AMATEUR RADIO



NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HX	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
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TO

THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT

AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____

NAME _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

FROM	DATE	TIME	TO	DATE	TIME
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