**11/1/18 Wayne-Pike ARES Net – Training**

***“How to get a Radiogram on a Traffic Net to deliver or relay”***

Tonight’s training lesson focuses on participating in a Traffic Net and picking up traffic to deliver or relay. OK, so you’ve decided to give it a try… what’s next?

Usually any net on which traffic is handled, the Net Control Station (NCS) will start the net’s preamble with some kind of instructions to stations checking into the net regarding how to check-in, and when to indicate that the station checking-in has traffic for the net. In most nets dedicated to handling traffic, the NCS will probably start off by asking if any station has “Emergency, Priority, or Time Value Traffic, please call now”. Rarely does anyone check into the net at this time unless the net is engaged in a genuine emergency or disaster situation. On HF nets, the NCS may ask for “any relays?” before moving on.

Next the NCS would probably ask if there are any representatives of “higher-up” nets wishing to check into the net. For the Eastern PA Emergency Phone Traffic Net, the NCS might ask for representatives from the 3rd Region Net… on the 3rd Region Net, the NCS would ask if there are any representatives from the Eastern Area Net… etc. Then, finally, the NCS would ask for any stations “with traffic, and with traffic only wishing to check into the net please call now”. This is generally when the action happens.

Say a station responds to this “check-in invititation” by saying “This is (pauses momentarily to check for doubling) WA2CCN, Whisky Alpha Two Charlie Charlie November, with traffic.” If the station is known to the NCS, he’d just say something like “Hi Hank, please list your traffic”. If unknown, the NCS would say “Net Control recognizes WA2CCN, please give us your name and location, and list your traffic.”

At this time the station with traffic would respond with “one for Harrisburg”; or “3 pieces of traffic, one for Harrisburg and 2 for Honesdale”, or it might be “a book of 3 for Harrisburg, Honesdale, and Hamlin”.

The NCS will continue asking for check-ins with traffic and then ask for check-ins with, or without traffic.

After all stations have checked into the net, the NCS would ask if there are “any takers?” for the traffic.

HERE’S YOUR CHANCE! Let’s say you’ll take the traffic for Harrisburg… so, the first thing you’d do is key your transmitter and say your call letters – “KC3LEE”… you probably don’t have to use phonetics at this time as you’ve already checked into the net. The NCS will then recognize you and you’ll say “I’ll take the Harrisburg traffic”. The NCS would then say “KC3LEE call WA2CCN and check signals for traffic.” KC3LEE and WA2CCN would exchange signal reports, and – if OK – the NCS would say “pass the traffic”.

The station with the traffic then proceeds with “Please copy number blah-blah-blah”, continue with the rest of the preamble, then the recipient’s name, address, phone number, etc. Then he’ll say “BREAK” or “BREAK FOR TEXT”, at which time you would say “GO” if you’ve received everything OK, or ask for corrections, fills for missed words, etc. When you finally say “GO”, the station with traffic will continue with the TEXT of the message and then say “Break for signature” and immediately continue with the signature. Finally he’ll say “END, NO MORE”. Again, you have an opportunity to ask for corrections or fills. If you’re satisfied that you’ve received the traffic correctly, say “ROGER”, one piece of traffic received, back to Net Control.”

If you’re taking multiple pieces of traffic, the sending station would say “END, TWO MORE”, etc., and repeat the process. The word “END” indicates the end of one message, and “END, NO MORE” the end of the traffic passing.

That’s it. Simple. Please keep in mind that the above scenario reflects a more formal traffic handling process. However, in reality, especially in nets handling a lot of traffic with experienced operators, a lot of the “formality” is avoided as the operators generally know what’s happening.

In the “old days” check-ins to the traffic net would only take traffic intended for their local geographic area to avoid long-distance telephone charges. However, “long distance charges” are no longer a concern. So, there’s no reason why you can’t take and deliver messages for anywhere in Eastern PA… or anywhere else in the Country, for that matter. But we still try to take local traffic when possible. Personally, on the EPAEPTN I’ll take any traffic that nobody else wants to handle. After all, it is a “traffic net”.

Finally, if you tell the NCS that this is the first piece of traffic that you’ve ever handled, or that you’re a newcomer to the wonderful world of traffic handling, the NCS – and everyone else on the net – will go out of their way to help you through the process. After all, everyone on the net will welcome more traffic handlers to the fold! So, don’t be bashful about giving it a try… we’ve all been there! You won’t be perfect when you start… don’t worry… there will be lots of encouraging tips and help available, and congratulations for trying.