Net Control Station (NCS) Operational Procedures

What is a Net Control Station?

A Net Control Station (NCS) is an operator responsible for controlling all radio traffic on the repeater during a directed net. The NCS should view themselves as an emergency dispatcher. The NCS needs to remain professional at all times and needs to maintain a calm collected demeanor.

NCS Standard Operating Guidelines

1. While serving as the net control station, you maintain total responsibility and authority in providing a smooth running net. The NCS, however, must accept any direction, guidance, or changes given by the GC-ARPSC Lead Operators.

2. Remember that you are in charge. Do not allow any arguments or unregulated operating to take place. Often, in emergencies, nerves become frayed and tempers can get short. Operate as a peacemaker and calm people down. Remember that your tone of voice is the most powerful part of your speech.

3. Give the time frequently.

4. When transmitting, be sure to "hang back" after the courtesy tone, in order to give stations a chance to break in. During emergency nets things can happen quickly. So be prepared to handle yourself in a controlled manor.

5. In times of critical emergency or a high traffic load, it is recommended that you appoint a backup net control station, to be sure all information is properly recorded and that if you suddenly have to transfer net control there is an operator already in place.

6. All your transmissions must be in a controlled and clear voice. This will help maintain control and ensure that all operators understand your transmissions.

7. At no time should you argue with a Lead Operator.
   a) If a disagreement occurs, either handle the conflict through a more private medium (email, phone, or, in extreme situations, on an alternate frequency) or wait until later.
   b) Those involved in the net and the scores of additional hams and others who are monitoring need to see you as a unified team.

8. Remember that, in compliance with FCC regulations, you must "ID" (identify your station by call sign) every ten minutes if you involved in constant communications or using tactical call signs.

9. Deactivation of all nets will be in conjunction with the NCS and the IC of the emergency incident or event. Once the net is concluded the repeater macro must be returned to normal amateur use. **NOTE** MACRO'S CAN ONLY BE BROUGHT UP AND RETURNED TO NORMAL USE BY A REPEATER CONTROL

OPERATOR. If you need a Control Operator just ask on the air if there is a Control Operator monitoring.

10. The NCS operator shall keep a documented log of all transmissions taking place during the net. This is preferred to be typed but can be hand written in an emergency situation. The log should record the time, which operator is calling the NCS, and a brief synopsis of the transmission.

11. The backup repeaters are as follows if the 147.260 repeater fails.
       1. 147.100 (Flint)
       2. 147.340 (Flint)
       3. 147.380 (Burton)
       4. 146.780 (Fenton)
       5. 444.600. (Flint)

       County Simplex Frequencies: 147.580 and 147.460.

The NCS or Lead Operator will have discretion to alter the order at which what back up repeater or Simplex frequency is used so it best fits the needs the incident.

12. The backup NCS shall periodically check the 147.100 repeater to announce the active net on the 147.260 repeater and request operators if needed.

Operating Guidelines for Handing Difficult Operators

- If any complications or confusion occur during the net do not handle it during the emergency. This must wait until after the emergency has ended.
- Sometimes you will get uninformed or irresponsible reports during nets, such as "This is (CALLSIGN) well, the clouds are getting darker over this way and it is starting to rain." Don't respond with critical remarks. Politely acknowledge their transmission and, if there is not a great deal of activity, you may be able to explain the type of report we are looking for.
- You may have operators check in and request assignment who are unqualified. Do not be rude just explain to them that they do not meet the requirements and see if there is another assignment they can fill.
- Have any operator with complaints contact the RO or his designee.

How to Assume and Turn Over Net Control

- At the time you are to assume net control, make a contact with the current NCS and notify them that you are ready to take over.
- Be sure that you have received the information you need in order to assume net control. This would include:
       1. Current weather advisories, watches and warnings (for SKYWARN).
       2. Current operators logged into the net and their assignments and tactical call signs.
       3. Current operational level of the net.

- Once the necessary information is obtained the current NCS should announce they are turning NCS over to the incoming NCS.
- The incoming NCS should then acknowledge they are assuming NCS.

NCS and Activation Procedures for SKYWARN

1. Upon authorization from the National Weather Service a Control Operator will bring up the MACRO for the correct net.
2. Within a reasonable amount of time notify the SKYWARN Officer and ARES-EC. Inform them of the activation and what part of the county is included in the watch or warning.
3. Establish a NCS. As operators check in to the net the NCS should log their location.
   - The NCS should have access to the internet and a working computer if possible.
   - The NCS needs to have a base radio capable of reaching the 147.26 and the 147.100 on a consistent basis.

- **During the SKYWARN net the NCS shall conduct status checks on operators who they have not had any radio contact with the past 30 minutes.** This can be done at shorter intervolves if the NCS deems it necessary.

SKYWARN Operational Alert Levels

Condition Standby- (Weather WATCH Macro should be used)

- A Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch has been issued for Genesee County.
- A Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch has been issued for a county adjacent to Genesee County.
- A Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Warning has been issued for a county adjacent to Genesee County.

This is a net condition that may or may not have an NCS, a directed net, or just may have an operator just monitoring the frequency, and may take check-ins at this time. This will be at the discretion of the NCS or Lead Operator.

This is the time when you give frequent instructions on the different levels (green, yellow, and red) and what is considered appropriate traffic during these conditions.

WEATHER WATCH MACRO SHOULD BE ACTIVATED AT THIS TIME

When using the repeater, keep a short pause in between your transmissions in case there is a need to step up the net status.

Condition Green- (Weather NET Macro should be used)

- A Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Tornado Watch has been issued for Genesee County and the NCS, MICON, or Lead Operator feels the storm system will begin to move into Genesee County within the hour.

WEATHER NET MACRO SHOULD BE ACTIVATED AT THIS TIME

This should be a directed net with a trained NCS. This is the time for all check-ins. **This is the time when you give frequent instructions on the different levels (green, yellow, and red) and what is considered appropriate traffic during these conditions.** WHEN AN OPERATOR IS CHECKING IN GIVE YOUR CALL SIGN AND LOCATION. Keep transmissions short and DO NOT check-in with your call sign using phonetics unless NCS requests it.

NCS should start dispatching operators to Genesee County 911 and Flint City 911. (RACES Card Required).

Damage reporting will also take place under this condition after the severe weather event has passed.

The NCS should broadcast frequent updates of storm cell location and storm track according to the latest radar. Advise operators in certain areas that the cell should be affecting their area shortly.

<mark>Condition Yellow</mark>- (Weather NET Macro should be used)

* A Severe Thunderstorm Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service for Genesee County.

Weather NET macro should be activated at this time if the NCS is moving from a Condition STAND BY directly to a Condition Yellow.

This shall continue to be a directed net. ALL transmissions will go through the NCS. **Do not check in to the net at this time unless you are reporting severe weather criteria or a real life emergency exists.** If an operator issues a severe criteria report that will also be considered the operator's check-in. Keep all transmissions short and to the point. There will be time given for check-ins after the severe weather passes as well as time for damage reports.

Operators should already be dispatched to Genesee County 911 and Flint City 911, if not they should be dispatched immediately!

The NCS should broadcast frequent updates of storm cell location and storm track according to the latest radar. Advise operators in certain areas that the cell should be affecting their area shortly.

<mark>Condition Red</mark>- (Weather NET Macro should be used)

* A Tornado Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service for Genesee County.

Weather NET macro should be activated at this time if the NCS is moving from a Condition STAND BY directly to a Condition Red.

This is the highest level of alert status. This shall continue to be a directed net. ALL transmissions will go through the NCS. The only transmissions taken by NCS will be severe weather criteria pertaining to tornado type activity or emergency or priority traffic that needs to be addressed immediately! **Do not check in to the net at this time unless you are reporting severe weather criteria or a real life emergency exists.** Your severe criteria report that will also be considered as your check-in. Keep all transmissions short and to the point. There will be time given for check-ins after the severe weather passes as well as time for damage reports.

Operators should already be dispatched to Genesee County 911 and Flint City 911, if not they should be dispatched immediately!

The NCS should broadcast frequent updates of storm cell location and storm track according to the latest radar. Advise operators in certain areas that the cell should be affecting their area shortly.

SKYWARN Deactivation and Damage Reporting

It will be at the discretion of the NCS along with the MICON operator to determine when the appropriate time to release all assigned operators. The NCS and MICON operator should take into account the possibility of storms affecting the county again and any damage reporting that is taken place.

Damage reporting should take place under a directed net using the Condition Green protocols. Once the net is secured from Condition Yellow or Condition Red status the NCS should deescalate the net back down to a Condition Green status to accept any type of damage reports in conjunction with the MICON operator. The operators at Genesee County 911 and Flint City 911 should remain at post until all damage reporting is complete. The NCS should also take time to accept additional check-ins at this point.

Receiving Weather Traffic

1. When receiving weather reports accuracy is very important. Have reporting stations report any information that you may have a question about. You must work closely with the MICON operator.
     a) Don't assume you heard correctly.
     b) Be sure to find out if such figures as wind speed, amount of rain, and depth of snow are measured or estimated.

2. During an actual severe weather event traffic on SKYWARN can become quite intense, hectic, and sometimes confusing.
     a) When multiple calls are made to net control, write down their calls and respond with the order in which you desire to receive their information. REMEMBER PRIORITY TRAFFIC ALWAYS COMES FIRST!
     b) Remember, you are in control. Stations will follow you if you are professional and show confidence.

3. Do not encourage operators to chase the storm. Just remember to give updates of storm cell location by monitoring radar and receiving updates from MICON.

MICON Operational Procedures

- Trained MICON operator.
- The MICON should have access to the internet and a working computer if possible.
- The MICON needs to have a base radio capable of reaching the 442.350 and the 147.260. The MICON must be able to monitor both frequencies.

There shall be ONLY one MICON operator for any Genesee County SKYWARN net and that operator will have the tactical call sign MICON.

The MICON operator will be known as the Genesee County key station when checking into the DTX net on the 442.350 repeater.

It is the responsibility of the MICON operator to monitor the local radar and weather reports. It is also the responsibility of the MICON to work with the NCS to determine which condition the Genesee County net should be working under.

1. Make contact with the Genesee County SKYWARN NCS on the 147.260 and see if a MICON operator is needed.
2. Hail K8DTX on the 442.350.
3. Give the NCS at DTX your call sign and name. Inform them you will be the Genesee County contact (key station) for the MICON net. Give them the condition of the Genesee County net. (Stand by, Green, Yellow, or Red.) On the DTX net your tactical call sign will be GENSEE COUNTY. Obtain any updates or briefings pertaining to Genesee County from K8DTX.
4. Contact the Genesee County SKYWARN NCS that you have checked into the MICON net.
5. Continue to monitor both nets. The DTX NCS will conduct status checks (roll calls) similar to the Genesee County NCS. They will also contact any counties as directed by the National Weather Service to issue severe weather statements.
6. If you receive a severe weather statement from K8DTX. Confirm that you understood the statement given on the DTX net. Inform K8DTX if the Genesee County net will be changing to a different condition.
7. Contact the Genesee County NCS and give a brief synopsis of the severe weather statement. Instruct the NCS if needed to lower or raise the condition level.
8. It will be the responsibility of the MICON to relay any urgent weather condition information to the DTX net. Some examples would be: Funnel clouds, tornados, severe winds, severe damage, severe flooding, or severe hail. The MICON must use discretion when reporting this information to the DTX net depending on the current level of the DTX net. (They function similar to our conditions).
9. Steps 5 – 8 will continue throughout the net.

It will also be the responsibility of the MICON to obtain damage reports from the Genesee County NCS after the storm has passed. The MICON should use discretion and transmit this information via ESpotter unless it is a significant event.

Once Genesee County has shut down their net or the DTX NCS has released our county check out of the DTX net and relay any information necessary.

How to Assume and Turn Over MICON

- At the time you are to assume MICON make contact with the current MICON and inform them you are ready to take over the MICON.
- Be sure that you have received the information you need in order to assume net control. This would include:
  1. Current weather advisories, watches and warnings (for SKYWARN).
  2. Current operational level of the net.
- Once the necessary information is obtained assume MICON.
- Hail K8DTX on the 442.350.
- Give the NCS at DTX your call sign and name. Inform them you will be the new Genesee County contact (key station) for the MICON net. Give them the condition of the Genesee County net. (Stand by, Green, Yellow, or Red.) On the DTX your tactical call sign will be GENSEE COUNTY. Obtain any updates or briefings pertaining to Genesee County from K8DTX.

NCS and Activation Procedures for Fire Related Incidents

1. Upon authorization from Genesee County 911 or the Flint Fire Department a Control Operator will bring up the MACRO for the correct net.
2. Within a reasonable amount of time notify the RACES RO and ARES-EC. Inform them of the activation and provide details of the location and incident.
3. Establish a NCS. As operators check in to the net the NCS should log their location.
   - The NCS should have access to the internet and a working computer if possible.
   - The NCS needs to have a base radio capable of reaching the 147.26 and the 147.100 on a consistent basis.

The following Duty Assignments must be filled in the following order:

Level One Coordination –

1. Mundy Twp Fire Department Station 2
2. Genesee County 911 (RACES Card Required).
3. Flint City 911 - if the incident is inside the City of Flint or involves the Flint Fire Department. (RACES Card Required).

Level Two Coordination –

1. Lead Operator to the emergency scene.
2. Mundy Twp Fire Department Station 2.
3. Genesee County 911 (RACES Card Required).
4. Flint City 911- if the incident is inside the City of Flint or involves the Flint Fire Department. (RACES Card Required).

- Once the above Duty Assignments have been filled it will be the discretion of the Lead Operator on the emergency scene to notify the NCS how many additional operators will be needed on the scene.
- Two operators can be assigned to the dispatch centers as well as Mundy Twp Fire Department Station 2 for relief or training purposes.
- If additional help is needed notify the ARES-EC so they can get mutual aid from surrounding counties.

- **During the Fire Coordination the NCS shall conduct status checks on operators who they have not had any radio contact with the past 30 minutes.** This can be done at shorter intervolves if the NCS deems it necessary.

- **During the Fire Coordination if an operator states they are in an emergency situation the NCS shall hold all radio traffic not related to the emergency on the repeater until the emergency is resolved. Once the emergency is resolved the NCS shall resume normal net operations.**

NCS and Activation Procedures for Emergency/Public Service/Search and Rescue Nets. (Emergency or ARES Macro depending on the emergency or event)

1. Upon authorization from Genesee County 911 or the Flint Fire Department a Control Operator will bring up the MACRO for the correct net.
2. Within a reasonable amount of time notify the RACES RO and ARES-EC. Inform them of the activation and provide details of the location and incident.
3. Establish a NCS. As operators check in to the net the NCS should log their location.

- The NCS should have access to the internet and a working computer if possible.
- The NCS needs to have a base radio capable of reaching the 147.26 and the 147.100 on a consistent basis.

The following Duty Assignments must be filled in the following order:

1. The Emergency Scene as deemed necessary by a Lead Operator.
2. Genesee County 911. (RACES Card Required).
3. Flint City 911 - if the incident is inside the City of Flint or involves the Flint Fire Department. (RACES Card Required).
4. EOC
5. Shelters (At least 2 operators)
6. Other assignments needed by the appropriate officer or his designee.

- Once the above Duty Assignments have been filled it will be the discretion of the Lead Operator on the emergency scene to notify the NCS how many additional operators will be needed on the scene.
- Two operators can be assigned to the dispatch centers for relief or training purposes.

- **During the Emergency Net the NCS shall conduct status checks on operators who they have not had any radio contact with the past 30 minutes.** This can be done at shorter intervolves if the NCS deems it necessary.

- **During the Fire Coordination if an operator states they are in an emergency situation the NCS shall hold all radio traffic not related to the emergency on the repeater until the emergency is resolved. Once the emergency is resolved the NCS shall resume normal net operations.**

NCS and Activation Procedures for Siren Testing Net (Emergency Macro)

- The NCS should have access to the internet and a working computer if possible.
- The NCS needs to have a base radio capable of reaching the 147.26

- The NCS should attempt to run this net from Genesee County 911 if possible

1. Bring up the Emergency Macro at approximately 12:45. Explain to all operators on the net what the purpose of the net is and how they can help.
2. Begin taking check ins and refer to the MSCG website for siren assignments. Some operators will ask for assignment and some will give the NCS the siren they will monitoring. If the operator would like an assignment ask them for a location and dispatch them to a close siren.
3. Explain to all operators that usually Genesee County 911 will activate the Civil Defense alert first then the Weather alert. Explain the difference in the siren tones.
4. When the test tones are concluded the NCS should go down their list and take reports from checked in operators first and then ask for reports from operators that are not checked in.

- The operator should report the following about the siren:
  1. Did the siren tones operate normally? (Steady tone for the weather alert and up and down tone is for a civil defense emergency.)
  2. Did the siren rotate if applicable?
  3. Any problems with the siren.

GC-ARPSC Lead Operators			
	Call Sign	Name	TX	Email
1	KD8LCN	Tony Bryant	810-955-4852	kd8lcn@yahoo.com
2	N8HXQ	Greg Ybarra	810-287-3830	n8hxq@arrl.net
3	KC8ZXF	Dale Collins	810-348-7094	kc8zxf@comcast.net
4	KD8BZZ	Mike Vogt	810-275-2716	kd8bzz@mscginc.org
5	KB8RVP	Mike Schafer	810-516-1810	
6	WC5B	Tom Lange	810-210-9796	wc5b@mscginc.org
7	WB8DLN	Doug Parkinson	810-964-2372	wb8dln@mscginc.org
8	KC8DUP	Travis Schlosser	810-577-3524	
9	KC8OYE	Tim Knights	810-545-7260	kc8oye@mscginc.org
10	W8FSM	Fred Moses	248-240-2705	fred@moses.bz

Control Operators - 05/01/2012			
Call Sign	Name	TX	Email
KA8NOG	Bob Grieve		ka8nog@arrl.net
KB8RVP	Mike Schafer	810-516-1810	
KC8DUP	Travis Schlosser	810-577-3524	
KC8OYE	Tim Knights	810-545-7260	kc8oye@mscginc.org
KC8ZXF	Dale Collins	810-348-7094	kc8zxf@comcast.net
KD8BZZ	Mike Vogt	810-275-2716	kd8bzz@mscginc.org
KD8LCN	Tony Bryant	810-955-4852	kd8lcn@yahoo.com
KF8UI	Clay Hewitt	810-938-9240	kf8ui@mscginc.org
N8HXQ	Greg Ybarra	810-287-3830	n8hxq@arrl.net
WB8DLN	Doug Parkinson	810-964-2372	wb8dln@mscginc.org
WB8YOB	Al Smith		
WC5B	Tom Lang	810-210-9796	wc5b@mscginc.org

NCS Trained Operators - May 1, 2012
KA8NOG - Bob Grieve
KB8RVP - Mike Schafer
KB8UTS - Daniel Herman
KC8DUP - Travis Schlosser
KC8OYE - Tim Knights
KC8ZXF - Dale Collins
KD8AYL - Jerry Baker
KD8BZZ - Mike Vogt
KD8FQB - Dave Kelly
KD8IRG - James Bowers
KD8LCN - Tony Bryant

KD8LJN - John Pulley
KD8LXO - Heather Baker
KD8MLP - Mark Smith
KD8PZO - William Trinkle
KF8UI - Clay Hewitt
N8HXQ - Greg Ybarra
N8ZBH - Russell Taunt
W8FSM - Fred Moses
WB8DLN - Doug Parkinson
WB8DOP - Dave Parkinson
WB8YOB - Al Smith
WC5B - Tom Lange

MICON Operators - May 1, 2012
KA8NOG - Bob Grieve
KB8RVP - Mike Schafer
KB8UTS - Daniel Herman
KC8DUP - Travis Schlosser
KC8OYE - Tim Knights
KC8ZXF - Dale Collins
KD8AYL - Jerry Baker
KD8BMB - Chris Vogt
KD8BZZ - Mike Vogt
KD8FQB - Dave Kelly
KD8IRG - James Bowers
KD8LCN - Tony Bryant
KD8LXO - Heather Baker
KF8UI - Clay Hewitt
N8HXQ - Greg Ybarra
N8VDS - Randy Bond
W8FSM - Fred Moses
WB8DLN - Doug Parkinson
WB8DOP - Dave Parkinson
WB8YOB - Al Smith
WC5B - Tom Lange