Bucks County Amateur
Radio Emergency Service

Radio operator voice procedures during a communications emergency.

Depending upon your assignment and location during activation, you may perform a wide variety of useful and meaningful tasks for the served agency. Your greatest value however is in the unique communications services you can provide. Most of your legitimate on-the-air functions will fall into one or more of these categories.

Administrative. Identify and coordinate the availability and assignment of manpower or material resources. Provide decision makers with information as to the needs at your location.

Net Control. Coordinate the orderly conduct of radio operators on a network.

Traffic handling. Send and receive information or messages for a third party.

Tactical. Point to point communication not under net control.

Technical. Technical information to assist other operators.

To function efficiently and in a professional manner, you must change your communication techniques from that used in casual amateur contacts. Since one of the purposes of the weekly net is to train operators in the methods and procedures they should use during an emergency, we must conduct the net in a similar manner.

Make it a habit to follow these guidelines:

Think of what you are going to say before keying the mike. Keep it succinct and professional.

During the net preamble, it is no longer necessary to define the zone delimiters. These boundaries are guidelines only, and are well established. The occasional check-in who is not familiar with the boundaries will have a perception of what part of the county he is in and will respond accordingly. NCS can define if questioned by the newcomer.

It is not necessary to announce the subtone frequency. 131.8 Hz is used universally throughout Bucks County and neighboring communities.

Abandon the time consuming practice of calling control, dropping the carrier to insure that you are not doubling, and then giving your call. Check in only with your call sign unless directed to do differently by net control. In the rare event of a double, the NCS will resolve.

Do not give your name when checking in. This includes the NCS operator. Use names only when referring to a non-ham third party. We all know each other, and our unique call signs identify one "Bob from another Bob".

When acknowledging calls, repeat only the call sign.

Use the ITU phonetic alphabet.

When checking in, do not say "no traffic" if you have none. Traffic should refer to a formal written message, or an informal message targeted for a specific destination. Say "with traffic"; only if you have a message for you wish to list. Use the prowords; query, announcement, comment, etc. as appropriate.

Minimize the use of please and thank you. While we all wish to show respect for one another, it is unprofessional.

Do not use ham jargon such as "fine business old man" or 73. Do not say good evening or good night. Keep it succinct and professional.

Do not transmit any unconfirmed information. Your transmissions are public and may be monitored by the victim's family or the media.

W3ICC rev 03-14-06