



***AIR FORCE MARS OPERATING INSTRUCTION
1 DECEMBER 2005***

**Communications and Information
*MILITARY AFFILIATE RADIO SYSTEM (MARS)
OPERATIONS***

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This instruction sets forth responsibilities, operational characteristics, organizational structure, policy, and procedures for the operation of USAF MARS stations. This publication provides procedures and guidance on the operation and administration of the USAF MARS membership, station and network operation, and management of government property used in MARS as authorized by AFI 33-139, DoD Directive 4650.2, and other governing DoD and Air Force directives. This instruction applies to Air Force personnel, including Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard units, USAF MARS affiliates, and other military services' MARS personnel when operating on USAF MARS nets. MARS stations will use this publication in conjunction with other applicable publications governing military radio and MARS station operations procedures. Refer technical questions to Chief, USAF MARS, HQ AFCA/ECFP, 203 West Losey St., Rm 3100, Scott AFB, IL 62225-5222.

The Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, governs this instruction. The Application for membership is subject to AFI 33-332, Air Force Privacy Act Program (PA).

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CHAPTER 1 MISSION AND ORGANIZATION

1.1. MARS Mission.

1.1.1. Provide point-to-point record message, data, and voice communications that support personnel morale and welfare.

1.1.2. Provide DoD-sponsored emergency or contingency communications on a local, national, or international basis as an alternate communications capability.

1.1.3. Provide auxiliary communications for military and civil officials during periods of emergency.

1.1.3.1. Although support to civil agencies is authorized and encouraged, specific capabilities will not be developed by USAF MARS solely to serve civil needs, since other government and civil agencies have this assigned responsibility. Of specific importance is the assistance USAF MARS can provide to civil communities, under the provisions of DoD Directive 3025.1.

1.1.4. Provide primary or backup communications capability for base disaster response forces.

1.1.5. Handle morale and quasi-official record and communications traffic for armed forces and authorized government civilian personnel stationed throughout the world.

1.1.6. Creates interest and trains affiliates in military communications procedures.

1.1.7. Provide a source of trained radio operators to augment military communications personnel when needed.

1.2. Duties and Responsibilities:

1.2.1. The Air Force develops Air Force MARS policy and provides overall guidance for the Air Force MARS program.

1.2.2. **Chief, USAF MARS:**

1.2.2.1. Manages the MARS program for the Air Force.

1.2.2.2. Issues operating policy and instructions to MARS stations.

1.2.2.2.1. Develops and publishes guidelines and management procedures for MARS operations.

1.2.2.3. Represents the Air Force on the DOD Joint MARS Chiefs Panel, the National Communications System (NCS)-Shared Resources (SHARES) high frequency (HF) program, and various amateur-radio and regional-MARS conventions and conferences.

1.2.2.4. Coordinates with MARS Chiefs from other services on matters requiring joint-service resolutions, or requiring cross-service station sharing coordination.

1.2.2.5. Coordinates with MAJCOMs to:

1.2.2.5.1. Determine emergency and contingency communications requirements.

1.2.2.5.2. Respond to MARS frequency requests.

1.2.2.6. Coordinates MARS frequency utilization.

1.2.2.6.1. Validate frequency requests for submission to the Air Force Frequency Management Agency.

1.2.2.6.2. Allocates and manages assigned MARS repeater frequencies according to AFI 33-118, *Electromagnetic Spectrum Management* and AFI 33-120, *Electromagnetic Spectrum Management*.

1.2.2.7. Establishes a management structure to administer the affiliate's organization and control network operations using AF Form 3661, MARS Personnel Action Notification, and AF Form 3665, Military Affiliate Radio System Certificate of Appointment.

1.2.2.7.1. Appoints regional and state MARS directors and other key officials.

1.2.2.7.2. Approves auxiliary MARS stations in coordination with the host command (when exercised).

1.2.2.7.3. Authorizes affiliates to operate as a MARS station.

1.2.2.7.4. Responds to applications for MARS membership and issues AF Form 3666, Military Affiliate Radio System Station License and Identification Card.

1.2.2.7.5. Grants periods of inactive status to MARS affiliates on a case-by-case basis.

1.2.2.7.6. Manages membership voluntary and involuntary terminations.

1.2.2.8. Establishes procedures for MARS affiliates to access the government telephone systems.

1.2.2.9. Oversees the management of excess and surplus government property acquired for use in MARS through the MARS Accountable Property Officer.

1.2.2.9.1. Ensures MARS property records are established according to AFMAN 23-110, USAF Supply Manual, Volume 2, Part 2.

1.2.2.10. Serves as Air Force liaison for the amateur radio community.

1.2.2.11. Approves requisitions for property for MARS utilization; this approval authority cannot be delegated. All approved requisitions will be processed through the USAF MARS Accountable Property Officer, who will initiate and sign a DD Form 1348-1A, Issue Release/Receipt Documents, to authorize release of identified property. Authority to sign release documents will not be delegated.

1.2.3. MAJCOM Communications Systems Offices:

1.2.3.1. Appoint a command MARS director, as necessary.

1.2.3.2. Identify MARS support requirements, as necessary.

1.2.3.3. Authorize appointment of installation MARS directors, as required.

1.2.3.4. Notify Chief USAF MARS of all appointments.

1.2.4. INSTALLATION MARS DIRECTOR (IMD), a position appointed at the discretion of the Installation Commander. Military MARS Stations are established with approval from the installation commander.

1.2.4.1 Responsible for providing a point of coordinating cooperatively between the military unit MARS station and the affiliate community.

1.2.4.2. Works with the base communications officer and/or Readiness Flight when MARS assets are requested to fulfill any disaster response communications requirements for their base.

1.2.4.3. Provide the Installation Commander and the Readiness Flight with information concerning MARS capabilities for planning purposes.

1.2.4.4. Ensure MARS tasking in local plans clearly specifies who, what, when, and where for communications support.

1.2.4.5. Maintain a roster of affiliate MARS and BST members in the local and state areas, who can provide assistance as required.

1.2.4.6. Insure BST members are trained IAW applicable procedures.

1.2.4.7. Establish recall procedures for personnel to respond to disaster or emergency communications support.

1.2.4.8. Establish procedures, including coordination, for deploying a mobile MARS communications (if applicable).

1.2.4.9. Conduct periodic exercises to include field operation of the MARS mobile facility (constructing and operating field stations, generating and forwarding message traffic, etc.).

1.2.5. **BASE SUPPORT TEAM (BST)**, a group of MARS members appointed at the discretion of the installation commander, volunteering to support a specified military installation with communications.

1.2.5.1. BST members must be capable of providing reliable communications support to their base of assignment under emergency/contingency conditions.

1.2.5.2. Each BST will consist of not more than 12 primary members.

1.2.5.3. Required to periodically exercise operational capabilities, annually.

1.2.6. **NATIONAL VOICE NET MANAGER**, a position appointed on an as needed basis by the USAF MARS Chief:

1.2.6.1. Direct operations on the TRANSCON Voice Net.

1.2.6.2. Serves as primary Net Control Station.

1.2.6.3. Maintains a list and schedule of selected members to serve as alternate NCS.

1.2.6.4. Controls the use of the assigned TRANSCON Voice frequencies

1.2.6.5. Ensures proper operating procedures, circuit discipline, and integrity are maintained.

1.2.6.6. Serve as primary contact point for any station needing communication support.

1.2.6.7. Maintains and forwards participation records quarterly to the respective Region Operations Analysis Manager (ROAM). This report will be submitted no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.

1.2.6.8. Develop and distribute station procedures promoting the efficient flow of traffic and reducing in-station message handling time to a minimum.

1.2.6.9. Provides additional training for NCS members.

1.2.6.10. Must have the capability to operate on all TRANSCON Voice Frequencies.

1.2.6.11. Must have necessary computer skills for various duties that are associated with the position.

1.2.7. **NATIONAL EMERGENCY COORDINATOR**, a position appointed on an as needed basis by the Chief, USAF MARS to serve as manager for all USAF MARS activities involving Emergency Communications (ECOM).

1.2.7.1. Works closely with other TRANSCON National Managers to ensure that all MARS functions are available to support ECOM operations as needed.

1.2.7.2. Serve as primary liaison with Army and Navy-Marine Corps MARS leadership for coordinating ECOM exercises and actual operations.

1.2.7.3. Promote Joint Service operations during all ECOM exercises and operations.

1.2.7.4. Coordinate ECOM support for FEMA, SHARES and DoD as required in support of exercises and actual events.

1.2.7.5. Provide guidance for ECOM training and contingency operations in support of both exercises and actual emergencies/disasters.

1.2.7.6. Develop and coordinate a USAF MARS National Emergency Communications Plan. This plan will serve as a basic plan for all regions and states to develop their own plans to meet the specific needs of their jurisdictions.

1.2.7.7. Develops and forwards quarterly reports regarding ECOM activities for USAF MARS.

1.2.7.8. Must have the capability to operate throughout the HF spectrum and on various operating modes.

1.2.7.9. Must have necessary computer skills for various duties that are associated with the position.

1.2.8. **NATIONAL DATA MANAGER**, a position appointed on an as needed basis by the Chief USAF MARS:

1.2.8.1. Responsible for the day-to-day management of the TRANSCON HF/VHF BBS networks.

1.2.8.2. Determine the number of systems needed on the inter-region network for adequate traffic forwarding and appoint affiliate stations to be assigned.

1.2.8.3. Establish message centers located geographically to assure coverage throughout the CONUS.

1.2.8.4. Establish gateways to other services to assure the flow of traffic during exercises or in the event of an actual emergency.

1.2.8.5. Ensures all BBS stations are functioning to pass traffic efficiently.

1.2.8.6. Must have the capability to operate on all TRANSCON HF/VHF BBS frequencies.

1.2.8.7. Must have necessary computer skills for various duties that are associated with the position.

1.2.8.8. Provides training for membership that wishes to participate.

1.2.8.9. Maintains and forwards participation records to the respective Region Operations Analysis Manager (ROAM). This report will be submitted no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.

1.2.8.10. Serves as primary BBS Station.

1.2.8.11. Maintains a list and frequency schedule of selected SYSOPS.

1.2.8.12. Controls the use of the assigned TRANSCON HF/VHF BBS frequencies.

1.2.8.13. Ensures proper operating procedures, circuit discipline, and integrity are maintained.

1.2.8.14. Serve as primary contact point for any station needing communication support.

1.2.8.15. Fills out AF Form 3661 appointing members as BBS sysops.

1.2.8.16. Establishes system configuration standards for all BBS Systems Operators to follow.

1.2.9. **NATIONAL TRAINING MANAGER**, a position appointed on an as needed basis by the USAF MARS Chief:

1.2.9.1. Responsible for ensuring standardized training within all regions.

1.2.9.2. Responsible for publishing quality training material for new members.

1.2.9.3. Works closely with Region Training Managers to resolve training issues.

1.2.9.4. Must have necessary computer skills for various duties that are associated with the position.

1.2.10. **NATIONAL PHONE PATCH MANAGER**, a position appointed on an as needed basis by the USAF MARS Chief:

1.2.10.1. Responsible for the day-to-day management of the Phone Patch Network.

1.2.10.2. Determine the number of personal needed for adequate traffic handling and appoint affiliate stations to be assigned.

1.2.10.3. Establish procedures to other services to assure the flow of traffic during exercises or in the event of an actual emergency.

- 1.2.10.4. Ensures all stations pass traffic efficiently.
- 1.2.10.5. Must have the capability to operate on all TRANSCON Phone Patch frequencies.
- 1.2.10.6. Must have necessary computer skill for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.10.7. Provides training for new members.
- 1.2.10.8. Maintains and forwards participation records to the respective Region Operations Analysis Manager (ROAM). This report will be submitted no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.
- 1.2.10.9. Serves as primary NCS Station.
- 1.2.10.10. Maintains a list and frequency schedule of selected Members.
- 1.2.10.11. Controls the use of the assigned TRANSCON Phone Patch frequencies.
- 1.2.10.12. Ensures proper operating procedures, circuit discipline, and integrity are maintained.
- 1.2.10.13. Serve as primary contact point for any station needing communication support.
- 1.2.10.14. Fills out AF Form 3661 appointing members to be authorized phone patch operators.
- 1.2.10.15. Ensure stations have the required capabilities prior to assignment to the phone patch net.
- 1.2.11. **NATIONAL AUTOMATIC LINKING ESTABLISHMENT (ALE) MANAGER**, a position assigned by Chief USAF MARS responsible for overall operation of the TRANSCON ALE Net.
 - 1.2.11.1. Accepts and process AF Form 3661 appointing members to be authorized to transmit on ALE.
 - 1.2.11.2. Controls ALE sound card software (specifically MARSALE) distribution to authorized MARS members.
 - 1.2.11.3. Serves as primary NCS station.
 - 1.2.11.4. Maintains a list of ALE stations
 - 1.2.11.5. Maintains a list and schedule of NCS stations.
 - 1.2.11.6. Ensures proper operating procedures, circuit discipline, and integrity are maintained.

- 1.2.11.7. Responsible for the day-to-day management of the AF MARS ALE Network.
- 1.2.11.8. Establish procedures to other services to assure the flow of traffic during exercises or in the event of an actual emergency.
- 1.2.11.9. Must have the capability to operate on all TRANSCON ALE frequencies.
- 1.2.11.10. Must have necessary computer skill for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.11.11. Provides training for new members.
- 1.2.11.12. Maintains and forwards participation records to the respective Region Operations Analysis Manager (ROAM). This report will be submitted no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.
- 1.2.12. **REGION MARS DIRECTOR (RMD)**, the senior affiliate management position in each region. It is a primary duty held, for a period of two years, with reappointment option, by a highly qualified, mature, knowledgeable MARS member. Position appointment is made by the Chief, USAF MARS. Incumbent serves as an extension staff member for the Chief, Air Force MARS on matters pertaining to the affiliate program.
 - 1.2.12.1. Participates in all region administrative actions and radio nets.
 - 1.2.12.2. Coordinates with other RMDs, SMDs, and the region net manager(s).
 - 1.2.12.3. Reviews all operational and technical affiliate correspondence moving through region channels.
 - 1.2.12.4. Appoints only the most qualified members to the region staff.
 - 1.2.12.5. Makes interim state MARS director appointments in the event an unscheduled vacancy occurs within his jurisdiction.
 - 1.2.12.6. Appoints and directly supervises all region affiliate member operations.
 - 1.2.12.7. Attends region and state conferences as time and finances permit.
 - 1.2.12.8. Maintains a HF radio station capable of operating on all assigned region frequencies.
 - 1.2.12.9. Must have necessary computer skill for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.13. **DEPUTY REGION MARS DIRECTOR**, a primary duty held by a highly qualified MARS member for a period of two years. Position appointment is made by the RMD.

- 1.2.13.1. Serves as the RMD in his absence (see paragraph 1.2.12).
- 1.2.14. **REGION TECHNICAL SERVICE MANAGER**, a primary duty held by an individual with background technical experience in electronics. Position appointment and length of service are set by the RMD.
 - 1.2.14.1. Responsible for organized technical studies and projects assigned within the region.
 - 1.2.14.2. Responsible for assisting region members with equipment situations.
 - 1.2.14.3. Advises the RMD on all MARS Technical Services (MTS) matters.
 - 1.2.14.4. Compiles MTS quarterly activity report and forwards to the ROAM.
 - 1.2.14.5. Maintains a liaison with other region (and out of region) staff members to determine suitable MTS projects, and no duplication of efforts from one region to another.
 - 1.2.14.6. Approves or otherwise acts on projects/proposals from the RMD, SMD, or other members within the region.
 - 1.2.14.7. Attends state and region conferences as time and finances permit.
 - 1.2.14.8. Conducts technical education seminars.
 - 1.2.14.9. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.15. **REGION FREQUENCY MONITOR SUPERVISOR (FYMON)**, a primary duty held by a highly qualified, mature MARS member. Position appointment and length are made by the RMD. Position will not be used to enforce procedural ethics in operations.
 - 1.2.15.1. Coordinates frequency monitoring duties and request within the region.
 - 1.2.15.2. Appoint other MARS members as HF frequency monitors (if required) on the basis of demonstrated knowledge, ability, and tact to assist in frequency monitor duties. Appointment using an AF Form 3661 is required.
 - 1.2.15.3. Periodically measures HF transmissions to ensure members are within tolerances.
 - 1.2.15.4. Assigns HF frequency monitors to various HF nets to assist Net Control Stations (NCSs) in keeping all transmissions within specifications.
 - 1.2.15.5. Maintains a roster of qualified HF frequency monitors.

- 1.2.15.6. Provides annual testing of frequency monitoring facilities to ensure their own equipment is within required tolerance. This also applies to other members appointed as frequency monitors to assist in FYMON duties.
- 1.2.15.7. Attends region and state conferences as time and finances permit.
- 1.2.15.8. Must have equipment capable of accessing all required USAF MARS frequencies.
- 1.2.15.9. Computer skills are necessary for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.16. **REGION TRAINING MANAGER (RTM)**, a primary duty held by an individual knowledgeable in MARS communications procedures. Position appointment and tenure are made by the RMD. Manages the regional affiliate HF operator training program and Net Control Station (NCS) training program.
 - 1.2.16.1. Establishes HF region training net and ensures each new MARS member receives initial training prior to being assigned to an operational position.
 - 1.2.16.2. Provides training to members in the region to include net operations, procedures, and voice operations.
 - 1.2.16.3. Develops training network schedules.
 - 1.2.16.4. Coordinates training with the SMDs and the RMD.
 - 1.2.16.5. Coordinates and develops other specialized training.
 - 1.2.16.6. Ensures training is in compliance with the established training material.
 - 1.2.16.7. Identifies areas needing corrective training or education.
 - 1.2.16.8. If required, may assign an assistant training manager based on ability, equipment, and location.
 - 1.2.16.9. Provides quarterly participation and trainee report(s) to ROAM.
 - 1.2.16.10. Requires providing on-the-air HF training.
 - 1.2.16.11. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.17. **REGION OPERATIONS ANALYSIS MANAGER (ROAM)**, a primary duty held by an individual with good writing skills. Position appointment and length of service are made by the RMD.

- 1.2.17.1. Compiles all MARS activity reports for the region, providing data as directed by the RMD.
- 1.2.17.2. Takes follow-up action on missing reports.
- 1.2.17.3. Advises RMD of activity report submission and compilation problems or problem areas.
- 1.2.17.4. Compiles a report regarding USAF MARS activities within the region. This report will be forwarded to Chief, USAF MARS thru the RMD.
- 1.2.17.5. Requires access to computer equipment to generate reports for the USAF MARS Office and other Region Officials.
- 1.2.17.6. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.18. **REGION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR**, a position appointed by the RMD.
 - 1.2.18.1. Organize and coordinate all regional ECOM activities to include planning for exercises, contingencies and support for actual emergencies. A minimum of two exercises should be performed per calendar year.
 - 1.2.18.2. Provide the ROAM and National Emergency Coordinator with activity reports and status of ECOM programs in their region.
 - 1.2.18.3. Possess sufficient communications capabilities to operate throughout the HF spectrum and various operating modes.
 - 1.2.18.4. Assists the SMDs and SECs to establish and coordinate their ECOM programs.
 - 1.2.18.5. Develop/update a Regional Emergency Communications Plan to supplement the National ECOM Plan. This plan will provide guidance for all members to follow.
 - 1.2.18.6. Promote Joint Service operations during all ECOM exercises and operations throughout the region.
 - 1.2.18.7. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
 - 1.2.18.8. Maintains a roster of all SECs.
- 1.2.19. **REGION PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER**, a primary duty held by an individual with writing and speaking skills. Position appointment and length of tenure are determined by the RMD inclusion in their files.

- 1.2.19.1. Maintains liaison with all Region Officials.
- 1.2.19.2. Maintains and forwards news items acquired from region media sources to ROAM for input into the quarterly report.
- 1.2.19.3. Serves as a staff adviser on matters of journalism and publications to the RMD.
- 1.2.19.4. Provides assistance to MARS members in preparing items for release to news media.
- 1.2.19.5. News releases about the MARS program or its participants are permissible, provided a disclaimer statement is used. The following disclaimer must accompany any items provided by local MARS members or groups to the news media: "This is not an official United States Air Force release, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Air Force or Air Force MARS." This is not an attempt to manage (or limit) news, but to help news organizations identify the source of their material.
- 1.2.19.6. Attends region and state meetings/conferences as time/finances permit.
- 1.2.19.7. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.20. **REGION DATA NETWORK MANAGER**, a duty held by an individual knowledgeable in the various digital transmitting techniques. Position appointment and length are determined by the RMD.
 - 1.2.20.1. Coordinates BBS System Operators (Sysops) within the region, in the development and maintenance of a Region Emergency/Disaster Support Program.
 - 1.2.20.2. Determines a routing for traffic within their individual regions, so each region is doing its part to implement the policies established by the RDNM.
 - 1.2.20.3. Works closely with the National Data Manager and National ALE Manager.
 - 1.2.20.4. Requires ability to operate on all MARS frequencies, and in all MARS digital modes (both HF and VHF).
 - 1.2.20.5. Fluency in the management of automated Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs) and message routing is required.
 - 1.2.20.6. Computer skills are necessary for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.21. **REGION VOICE NETWORK MANAGER**, a duty held by an individual knowledgeable in voice transmitting techniques. Position appointment and length are determined by the RMD.

- 1.2.21.1. Directs operations of the region HF voice network and submits activity report to the ROAM.
- 1.2.21.2. Assigns selected members to serve as net control stations to the region HF voice network.
- 1.2.21.3. Maintains a list and schedule of selected members to serve as net control stations to the region HF voice network.
- 1.2.21.4. Serves as primary Net Control Station.
- 1.2.21.5. Ensures proper operating procedures, circuit discipline, and integrity are maintained.
- 1.2.21.6. Maintains and forwards participation records quarterly to the respective Region Operations Analysis Manager (ROAM). This report will be submitted no later than the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.
- 1.2.21.7. Provides additional training for NCS members.
- 1.2.21.8. Requires ability to operate on all MARS HF voice frequencies.
- 1.2.21.9. Computer skills are necessary for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.22. **STATE MARS DIRECTOR**, the senior affiliate management position in each state. Position appointment, which runs for two years, with reappointment option, is made by the Chief, USAF MARS. With the exception of the SMD, state appointed staff members are not provided official calls
 - 1.2.22.1. Responsible for the management of MARS operations and affiliate member activities within the state and for providing services to customers (military, civilian, and intrastate MARS components).
 - 1.2.22.2. Appoints and manages a staff consisting of an emergency coordinator. An assistant state director may be appointed, if required.
 - 1.2.22.3. Provides members for assignments to region, TRANSCON, and special nets as needed.
 - 1.2.22.4. Provides participation information pertaining to all state members (including BST members) to the ROAM.
 - 1.2.22.5. Appoints a state staff if needed. This staff will consist of those people required to assist the SMD in accomplishing certain duties that require further assistance.
 - 1.2.22.6. Develops emergency support capability and an alerting network within the state.

- 1.2.22.7. Initiates AF Form 3661 action on state members IAW current procedures.
- 1.2.22.8. Maintains an individual file on each member in the state.
- 1.2.22.9. Reviews each membership application prior to submission to the RMD.
- 1.2.22.10. Assigns net designators for all state VHF nets.
- 1.2.22.11. Endorses member equipment requests and forwards them to the USAF MARS Accountable Property Officer.
- 1.2.22.12. Provides IMDs with a current membership list every six months.
- 1.2.22.13. Assigns sponsors to new affiliate members to assist in program indoctrination.
- 1.2.22.14. Coordinates operation of VHF operations within the state and works with adjacent state SMDs regarding cross-border VHF operations.
- 1.2.22.15. Duties require that HF and VHF (If used) equipment be operational on all region MARS frequencies.
- 1.2.22.16. Must be available for coordinating administrative and traffic nets.
- 1.2.22.17. Attends state and regional MARS meetings as required, time and finances permitting.
- 1.2.22.18. Computer skills are necessary for various duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.22.19. Approves all equipment transfers between affiliate members.
- 1.2.23. **STATE EMERGENCY COORDINATOR**, a position appointment and tenure are determined by the SMD.
 - 1.2.23.1. Organize and coordinate all state ECOM activities to include planning for exercises, contingencies and support for actual emergencies. A minimum of two exercises should be performed per calendar year.
 - 1.2.23.2. Provide Regional Emergency Coordinator with activity reports and status of ECOM programs in their region.
 - 1.2.23.3. Possess sufficient communications capabilities to operate throughout the HF spectrum and various operating modes.
 - 1.2.23.4. Work closely with the Regional Emergency Coordinator and the SMD to develop/update a State Emergency Communications Plan to supplement the Regional ECOM Plan. This plan will provide guidance for all state members to follow.

- 1.2.23.6. Promote Joint Service operations during all ECOM exercises and operations throughout the region.
- 1.2.23.7. Computer skills are necessary for various administrative duties that are associated with the position.
- 1.2.24. **AFFILIATE MEMBER STATIONS** are amateur radio stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and approved for MARS membership by the Chief, USAF MARS.
 - 1.2.24.1. Maintain a copy of USAF MOI.
 - 1.2.24.2. Reads, monitors, and adheres to all USAF MARS Broadcasts.
 - 1.2.24.3. Comply with the provision of USAF MOI and other Air Force Instructions governing MARS operations, including MARS broadcasts.
 - 1.2.24.4. Maintain an operational NTIA compliant HF radio station (If VHF is used, it must also be NTIA compliant) and actively support USAF MARS HF communications requirements.
 - 1.2.24.5. Participate a minimum of 12 hours each quarter. These 12 hours may be on any established MARS radio net. The member's primary assignment may be to any regularly scheduled HF net by AF Form 3661 action.
 - 1.2.24.6. Maintain, safeguard, and account for excess/surplus government property received from USAF MARS.
 - 1.2.24.7. Maintain a current amateur license and keep the state MARS director apprised of all changes that affect membership status (e.g., a change in station location, license level, mailing address, e-mail address, phone number, or station capability).
 - 1.2.24.8. Give technical help, construction, and experimentation support to the MARS program.
 - 1.2.24.9. Provide operations, maintenance, or administrative support to installation MARS directors, when requested.
 - 1.2.24.10. Avoid, while operating on MARS frequencies, any deliberate action or conduct that would reflect unfavorably on the individual member or USAF MARS.
 - 1.2.24.11. Attend and contribute to MARS meetings and conferences, time and finances permitting.
 - 1.2.24.12. Maintain a station log.

1.3. Affiliate Official Appointments are a controlled and orderly process to periodically rotate civilian officials with other qualified members is an essential part of a dynamic and progressive MARS program. Therefore, the appointment of affiliate members to the positions of Region MARS Director (RMD), or State MARS Director (SMD) will be for a term of two (2) years, (1 Jan – 31 Dec of following year) with renewal at the discretion of the Chief, USAF MARS. Newly appointed members will use interim months after appointment as a period of transition to be familiarized with procedures and responsibilities of their positions. Appointments in regions one, three, and five, will be made in odd numbered years (e.g., 2003, 2005, etc.). Appointments in regions two, four, and six will be made in even numbered years (2004, 2006, etc.).

1.3.1. Positions to be filled will be announced in a MARS broadcast message. Applicants must submit a brief resume stating their qualifications, past experience, station capability, and willingness to serve in the position. All resumes must arrive at USAF MARS office as announced in the message.

1.3.2. Selection will take place during October each year by the Chief, USAF MARS. The Chief will:

1.3.2.1. Review the qualifications and records of each applicant.

1.3.2.2. Forward letters of selection and AF Form 3661's (MARS Personnel Action Notification) to those individuals selected.

1.3.2.3. Forward letters of non-selection to those individuals not chosen.

1.3.2.4. Special Net Manager (SNM) Appointments are direct appointments by the Chief, USAF MARS, on an "as required" basis. These are usually for unique positions of either short or long term duration.

1.3.3. All Outgoing Officials (National, Regional, or State) will:

1.3.3.1. Contact the new official and make arrangements for the transition.

1.3.3.2. Forward pertinent records to the new official.

1.3.3.3. Provide necessary assistance to promote continuity of operation.

1.3.3.4. Transfer any MARS equipment obtained from DRMO that is required for the position.

1.3.4. The region staff may vary, dependent upon the tasking needs of each region. Each RMD will appoint his/her region staff dependent upon the needs of the region. Members of the region staff will be provided an official MARS call designating his position while performing these official duties. Region Official Call signs will only be used on their respective region HF nets.

CHAPTER 2
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, ASSIGNMENTS and TRAINING

- 2.1. Because emergencies and contingencies are not restricted geographically to military installations, there is a requirement to establish MARS communication nets configured to support a wide spectrum of potential applications over a wide range of territory. Region and TRANSCON HF voice and digital traffic systems are the backbone of USAF MARS' HF communication networks. With the exception of the national phone patch net, most USAF MARS traffic is passed on these nets. Therefore, support of these nets depends on recruiting HF capable amateur radio operators. In recognition of the fact that many of the USAF MARS high frequencies are not located near the amateur bands, members with continuous 3 to 30 MHz capability should be actively recruited to satisfy system requirements.
- 2.2. Eligibility Criteria.
 - 2.2.1. Minimum age of members is 17 years.
 - 2.2.2. Applicants and/or current members must be a citizen of the United States, or lawfully admitted to the US. for permanent residency under the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Chapter 12, and reside within the borders of the US, its territories, or possessions. This applies to alien residents who are U. S. military members and their families stationed overseas under an overseas military command's jurisdiction.
 - 2.2.3. Applicants and/or current members must hold a valid amateur radio operator's license issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
 - 2.2.4. Applicants and/or current members must have an operational HF radio station prior to acceptance into the MARS program.
 - 2.2.4.1 HF stations must be capable of operating on (or which can be modified to operate) a minimum of two MARS frequencies, assigned by Region MARS officials.
 - 2.2.4.2. HF stations must have the capability of operating voice and any of the digital modes.
 - 2.2.4.3. All HF radio equipment must have a frequency stability tolerance of +/- 20 Hz as set by the National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA).
 - 2.2.5. MARS has no requirements for VHF operations. However if VHF is used, it is used to complement the HF station. It must also comply with the specifications set by the NTIA.
 - 2.2.5.1. Per the NTIA, by 1 January 2008 all VHF equipment must not exceed a frequency deviation of +/- 3.11 kHz, and have a channel spacing of 12.5 kHz (or less).
- 2.3. Individual membership applications will be made using the membership application form.

- 2.3.1. Each new applicant will be provided a copy of the MARS application form, as well as the address of the appropriate SMD
 - 2.3.2. The new applicant will be assisted in completing the form and send it to the SMD. The SMD will review the application for completeness, accuracy, and eligibility, and then forward it to the RMD for processing.
 - 2.3.3. The RMD will assign an "AFT" call sign, enter the info into the Air Force MARS database program, initiate an AF Form 3661 assigning the individual to the training net. The AF Form 3661 will be the authorization for the individual to operate on the MARS training nets. No MARS station license will be issued until the member successfully completes the required training, receives the training certificate, and has been issued an "AFA" call sign.
 - 2.3.4. The RMD will send the completed MARS application, along with the AF Form 3661 back to the SMD for distribution. The SMD will distribute the AF Form 3661 to the applicant, the RTM, and the ROAM.
 - 2.3.5. After successful completion of the training, the RTM will notify the RMD, who will change the call sign to an "AFA" call sign, initiate the MARS station license, ID card, and training certificate. These documents will be sent to the SMD, who will initiate a form AF Form 3661 assigning the individual, as needed, in the state program and distribute as appropriate.
- No waivers for the training requirement will be allowed with the exception of active duty or Reserve personnel with an AFSC of 3C1XX (Communications System Radio Operator).
- 2.4. All training and training materials will be based upon this MOI and the following publications:
 - Allied Communications Publication (ACP) 121, *Communications Instructions General*
 - ACP 125, *Communications Instructions Radio Telephone Procedures*
 - AF MARS Training Manual
 - AF MARS Emergency Communications Plan 2005-1, dated 17 Oct 2005
 - 2.4.1. Regions may write supplements to the AF MARS Training Manual and the AF MARS Emergency Communications Plan. These supplements can not change the basic content, but can provide additional information that is specific to their region.
 - 2.4.2. It is highly suggested all National Managers publish a training guide for their respective areas. These guides should be published within the AFMARS Training Manual.
 - 2.5. Affiliate stations may operate on any frequency or mode assigned on an AF Form 3661, MARS Personnel Action Notification. They may also operate on any VHF frequency assigned to MARS, TRANSCON voice, or region HF without an AF Form 3661 assignment. All phone patch operations are considered closed assignments. While in training status, new members are restricted to region HF training or VHF frequencies only.

2.5.1. The establishment of a BBS, ALE, or a PHONE PATCH Station is not authorized while in training status.

2.5.2. Trainees must have been awarded their "AFA" call sign prior to entering Net Control Station Training.

2.5.3. Trainees may participate in real world or exercise situations, only if they have participated in several formal training sessions.

CHAPTER 3 PARTICIPATION, REPORTING, and LOGGING

- 3.1. This chapter provides guidance in reporting participation time of MARS members. In addition guidance into completing their station logs. Information in this MOI is exempt from a Reports Control Symbol.
- 3.2. In order to provide an accurate data base for management of the MARS system, individual member activity must be recorded. Member activity can be documented from many areas of MARS support. This MOI identifies activities to which participation time may be credited and establishes participation reporting procedures.
- 3.3. As established by the Joint MARS Chiefs' Panel, a minimum of 12 hours participation per calendar quarter on an established HF radio net is required. Each member's goal should be to devote one hour each week to the program. Each individual affiliate member is responsible for ensuring his/her participation time is accurately recorded. IMDs, SMDs, RMDs, and SNMs will ensure all participation time is credited and forwarded to the appropriate agency. Members who wish to verify hours of participation credited to them can receive this info from their SMD.
 - 3.3.1. In addition to the 12 hours of operating time, it is desirable that each member draft and send at least 2 properly formatted messages. Of the 2 messages, one must be sent to the Region Training Manager or any other region official upon requested by the Region Training Manager. Due to the responsibilities instilled upon the RMD, no practice messages will be sent to the RMD.
 - 3.3.1.1. The message will be of official traffic in nature, contains the word "EXERCISE EXERCISE" at the beginning and end of the body of the text.
 - 3.3.1.2. The message can be sent over any authorized USAF MARS HF or VHF operating mode. Internet e-mail is not to be used to send the practice messages.
- 3.4. Six (6) of the twelve (12) hours must be in-station operations, on the net of primary assignment. The member's assignment may be to any regularly scheduled HF net or Base Support Team (BST) by AF Form 3661 action. Members may accrue additional participation time in any of the following areas:
 - 3.4.1. Operation on Transcon, Region or State voice nets.
 - 3.4.1.1. Each NCS will maintain a list of stations (including the check-in and check-out times) having checked into the established net it controls.
 - 3.4.1.1.1. Participation time will be credited for each affiliate station with actual time on the air for each net. For example, AFA3YS checks in at 0100Z and checks out at 0145Z. Total participation time for that affiliate's station is 45 minutes; or, AFA5HR is able to check into three separate nets, and does so at 1120Z. He stops operating at 1200Z. Total participation

time for this member would still be only 40 minutes (not one hour and twenty minutes because of multiple net operations).

- 3.4.1.2. Participation credit will be given to stations that have full transmitting and receiving capabilities, and are on the air during net operations. Monitoring only cannot be counted as affiliate participation (this includes FYMONs).
- 3.4.2. Operation on the data network (BBS).
 - 3.4.2.1. Individual stations and SYSOPS are required to maintain participation time for BBS operation.
 - 3.4.2.2. Each BBS in full time 7/24 operation will be accredited one hour of operating time per day of operation within a quarter for each frequency of operation. For example, a BBS scanning three frequencies would be credited 3 hours per day.
 - 3.4.2.3. Each BBS in part time daily operation regardless of software or mode will be eligible for one half hour of operating time per day of operation.
 - 3.4.2.4. In the event of an emergency or exercise which would require a part time BBS to operate 7/24, time accounting for this period would be the same as a full service BBS.
 - 3.4.2.5. Serial/slip link, telephone modem, and automated traffic forwarding does not account for time credit.
 - 3.4.2.6. SYSOPs of the TRANSCON Data Network will credit each PBBS or Keyboard Operator with 30 minutes time for each connect to his/her system checking for traffic.
 - 3.4.2.7. Affiliate stations will receive one hour for each piece of traffic originated or transferred from voice nets and placed into the Data Network, but not for messages relayed from a digital mode.
- 3.4.3. Operation on the National phone patch net.
- 3.4.4. Affiliates with official appointments may count their time spent on the off-air aspects of their positions.
- 3.4.5. Other MARS Networks.
 - 3.4.5.1. Operation on nets of Army or Navy-Marine Corps MARS (see Chapter 16). This will not count toward minimum quarterly requirement.
- 3.4.6. Work on MARS special projects assigned by the Technical Services Manager, RMD, or SMD.
- 3.4.7. Support of actual or training emergency/contingency operations.

3.4.8. Attendance at an annual region MARS conference.

3.4.8.1. Affiliates attending region conferences are entitled to full participation credit for one quarter. The member may choose the quarter he/she wishes to apply the credit up to one year after the conference. It is the member's responsibility to inform their respective SMD who will inform the ROAM of the specific quarter to apply this time. The time may not be split; it must be credited to one quarter only.

3.4.9. Operation on ALE nets.

3.4.10. Operation on SHARES net activities does not constitute valid participation for MARS participation credit.

3.4.11. Participation credit for FYMON duties is only granted when a FYMON is actually checked into an USAF MARS HF net.

3.5. RMDs may grant or approve waivers to participation time requirements, based on special considerations and full justification (i.e. nursing home residents, etc.). This authority must be used judiciously. SMDs are empowered to approve inactive status not to exceed six months when waivers of HF are not in the program's best interest. The RMD will be sent an info copy of all actions.

3.6. Each affiliate will be given credit for station activity on only one voice net at a time, regardless of how many nets they have simultaneously entered. In other words, four hours of operation on three separate nets does not equal 12 hours total. The member receives only four hours participation credit time (credited to only one of the nets being operated on). This is not meant to dissuade MARS affiliates from operating on more than one net at a time, but is designed to keep monthly participation times at realistic figures.

3.7. Reporting Procedure.

3.7.1. Special net managers will certify and report participation time for members. This report will be submitted to the respective ROAMs.

3.7.1.1. NCS members of the Phone Patch Net, TRANSCON Voice, ALE, and BBS Sysops, will report participation time(s) for their nets to the Special Net Manager.

3.7.2. VHF voice net time will be submitted by the local VHF net manager directly to the SMD, who will forward the report to the ROAM.

3.7.3. NCS Reports will consist of:

3.7.3.1. BBS

- 3.7.3.1.1. REPORT 1: SYSOP operating time, number of traffic messages passed, traffic destined for, and Region Users of his/her system excluding other Full Service systems operating within his/her region.
- 3.7.3.1.2. REPORT 2: Total of BBS systems as reported within the region.
- 3.7.3.1.3. REPORT 3: Time for out-of-region members.
- 3.7.3.2. Voice (TRANSCON, Region, State, Phone Patch)
 - 3.7.3.2.1. Total number of hours logged in by each station. .
 - 3.7.3.2.2. Total number of traffic messages passed by each station (separate actual from practice/exercise messages).
 - 3.7.3.2.3. Traffic destined for (not required for practice/exercise messages)
- 3.7.4. ROAMs will submit a compiled quarterly report of all region activities to USAF MARS within twenty (20) working days of end of quarter (1 Jan, 1 Apr, 1 Jul, 1 Oct).
 - 3.7.4.1. List of members and their participation hours (HF, VHF, station maintenance, hours spent performing official duties, etc)
 - 3.7.4.2. The number of traffic messages passed (both actual and practice/exercise).
 - 3.7.4.3. A summary of the traffic being passed (both actual and practice/exercise).
 - 3.7.4.4. Exercises/Actual events where AF MARS played a part.
 - 3.7.4.5. Public recognition of MARS.
 - 3.7.4.6. Status of projects as assigned by RMD, SMD, or any other region official.
 - 3.7.4.7. Status on the new MARS trainees.
 - 3.7.4.8. Names and Call signs of Affiliates who have left, joined, or have become silent keys from the USAF MARS Program.
- 3.7.5. Affiliates operating on nets outside their home region, or on nets belonging to other branches of MARS, must keep track of their time themselves and report this quarterly to their SMD for credit. Affiliates traveling outside their home region may check into any local MARS net they wish (except restricted special nets, and nets of other service branches with their own restrictions), the thought being that a station provides a useful service more related to where it is located at the time rather than where the call sign is registered. But participation logging is up to the affiliate in those cases.

3.7.6. Region net NCSs report station participation to the RVNM, who then reports quarterly to the ROAM.

3.8. All MARS affiliate members will maintain a log of the events of their station. All logs are subjected to be reviewed by the USAF MARS office upon request.

3.8.1. Station Logs will include the minimum:

Note: More information may be required in the station logs; this is based upon the position being held. See other chapters of this MOI.

3.8.1.1. Date and Time logged on and off the net.

3.8.1.2. Subject of traffic messages.

3.8.1.3. Whom the traffic message is destined for, where it is coming from.

3.8.1.4. Any other significant events that occurred during station operation.

3.8.1.5. Net Designator.

CHAPTER 4 PERSONNEL ACTIONS

- 4.1. Like any military organization, MARS has a system of assigning affiliate members to various nets and positions of responsibility. The system also provides for documentation of authorized inactivity and termination of membership. AF Form 3661 is employed to document these MARS personnel actions.
- 4.2. Any appointed official (National, Regional, or State) may be removed from office by the person whom they were appointed by (or from the Chief, USAF MARS) for:
 - 4.2.1. Failure to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the position.
 - 4.2.2. Failure to comply with instructions furnished by the USAF MARS office.
 - 4.2.3. Any action determined by the appointing authority to be detrimental to the USAF MARS program.
- 4.3. Resignation from any position may be submitted at any time without prejudice.
- 4.4. Affiliate members may be terminated for:
 - 4.4.1. Bringing discredit upon themselves or MARS:
 - 4.4.2. Failure to abide by the publications and rules governing MARS.
 - 4.4.3. Failure to complete required MARS training.
 - 4.4.4. Failure to maintain minimum quarterly participation on established MARS radio nets as instructed by published management guidelines.
 - 4.4.5. Failure to maintain a current FCC amateur radio license.
 - 4.4.6. Failure to notify appropriate authorities of a change of address.
 - 4.4.7. Repeated infractions caused from improper radio operations.
- 4.5. Table 4.1 shows the MARS officials authorized to prepare AF Form 3661, the situations under which they are required to be initiated, and the authorized approving officials. All AF Forms 3661 must be completed IAW with this table.
 - 4.5.1. When a member successfully completes the required training, the Region Training Manager or the State Training Officer will notify the RMD, who will initiate an AF Form 3661 showing completion of training, change the call sign from AFT to AFA, prepare the training certificate and issue a MARS Station/Operator's license. These forms will be sent to the SMD, who will initiate an AF Form 3661 for the individual showing assignment (Traffic

net, BST, Phone Patch net, Etc.) and distribute all documents to the appropriate individuals/personnel files. After the above action, the SMD will initiate and sign all AF Form 3661 on the individuals in that state, except for terminations. Resignations, deaths, and transfers, may be initiated and signed by the SMD who will forward a copy to Chief, USAF MARS and the RMD for distribution. Only the Chief, USAF MARS will sign AF Form 3661 terminating a member for cause. Any member canceled may appeal to Chief, USAF MARS for reinstatement.

- 4.5.2. All RMDs, SMDs, and SNMs are authorized to originate AF Form 3661 involving affiliate members. RMD level authority for originating and authenticating AF Form 3661 will only be used to preclude unreasonable delays in processing member assignments. Computer generated substitutes for AF Form 3661 are authorized, but must include all required data.
- 4.5.3. RMDs are the only officials authorized to change the call sign of a trainee to a certified operator.
- 4.5.4. Members who are terminated from the USAF MARS program will not be allowed to rejoin USAF MARS for a period of two years. Members who resign must wait one year before re-applying for membership. (Waiting period may be waived for members resigning specifically to transfer to another service's MARS program.) Members who are in training status ("T" calls), who have exceeded their training dates will also be terminated. Reinstatement rights are the same as those for other terminated members. Members terminated for extreme cause (for example, unbecoming conduct) must wait a minimum of 5 years before requesting reinstatement in any of the military services' MARS programs.
- 4.5.5. SMDs are not allowed to grant inactive status for members for more than six (6) months for any reason. Extensions must be approved by the RMD. Military personnel departing on official orders (PCS) overseas will be granted indefinite inactive status but must reinstate within 90 days of return from overseas or may be permanently terminated. These members will be referred to the RMD along with a copy of PCS orders for proper action.
- 4.5.6. SMDs will initiate all AF Form 3661 actions for terminations, resignations, and silent keys. The SMD will sign all of the foregoing actions except terminations for cause, which must be forwarded to the Chief USAF MARS for signature.

Table 4.1 AF Form 3661 Actions

If Action pertains to	Form initiated by	Form signed by	Copies	Distributed to
Appointment of RMD or SMD	Chief	Chief	4	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual
Appointment of National Managers	Chief	Chief	4	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual
Appointment of Special Assistants and other key non-region/state official	Chief	Chief	4	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual
Appointment of region staff officials other than RMD	RMD	RMD	4	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual
Digital Net Assignments (Primary Assignments)	Net manager	Net Manager	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, Net Manager
VHF, Region HF and Training Net Assignments (Primary Assignments)	SMD	SMD	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, Net mgrs
Phone Patch Net Assignment (Secondary Assignment)	Net manager	Net manager	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Net Manager, Individual
Appointment of FYMON (Primary Assignment)	Region Chief FYMON	SMD	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, Region Chief FYMON
Appointment of MARS Member Volunteer Official/State Level (Secondary Assignment)	SMD	SMD	4	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, Rgn Chief FYMON
Appointment of Base Support team Leader or Member (Primary or Secondary)	IMD	SMD	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, BST Leader, Individual
Inactive Member (PCS, Illness, Equipment Failure, etc.)	SMD	SMD	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, ROAM
Cancellation of Net Assignments (Primary Assignments)	SMD	Chief	5	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, ROAM
Termination from a region due to a move	SMD	SMD	6	Chief, RMD, SMD, Individual, New SMD, ROAM

4.6. Maintenance of Records. SMDs will insure a copy of each AF Form 3661 pertinent to a member is in the member's personnel file, and that a current AF Form 3661 is on hand for each member.

4.7. Chief, USAF MARS may grant termination waivers of affiliates for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

4.7.1. Grants periods of inactive status to MARS affiliates on a case-by-case basis.

4.7.2. Establishes procedures for MARS affiliates to access the government telephone systems.

CHAPTER 5 CORRESPONDENCE

- 5.1. It is every member's responsibility to use proper channels for corresponding with USAF MARS. When an item is generated, it should be processed in the swiftest manner available.
- 5.2. Written correspondence generated by an affiliate member to solicit a response from the USAF MARS staff, depending on the subject matter, will be sent to the next person in the affiliate channel. As the correspondence progresses, each recipient will either add statements to the material or endorse it prior to forwarding. This can be done by adding onto the bottom of the correspondence, or by drafting a letter to be attached to the original document. If an attached letter is used, it will not be removed before reaching USAF MARS. If no comments are necessary, an endorsement will still be needed to signify concurrence or non-concurrence with the correspondence. Likewise, responses prepared by the USAF MARS staff will be returned direct to the originator with info copies provided for each intermediary.
 - 5.2.1. The following are the only provisions by which the proper channels may be bypassed when communicating with USAF MARS.
 - 5.2.2. When information in the correspondence is such that minimal delays will adversely affect the mission being performed.
 - 5.2.3. When the information being conveyed reflects unfavorably upon anyone in the proper channel, or is of a personal or sensitive nature.
- 5.3. To alleviate excessive delays and expense it is recommended that information be sent on-the-air whenever possible, or by internet email. However, on-the-air discussions will not adversely reflect upon another MARS member or bring discredit upon the MARS program. If the situation warrants written correspondence, the same rules stated above will apply. This information will go up through channels to whatever level is necessary for it to be resolved, or moved laterally within channels. In any case, an info copy will go to the SMD or RMD, as appropriate.
- 5.4. All mail forwarded by affiliates via US mail will bear the return address of the sender (by USPS regulation). A slant bar (/) and the affiliate's call sign will be included on the first line of the return address.

CHAPTER 6 MESSAGES FORMAT AND PROCEDURES

- 6.1. Each message sent by MARS must meet certain administrative requirements as well as satisfy the rules established by international, national, and service (Morale messages originating in the CONUS are not to be mailed at government expense)..
- 6.2. Individual MARS stations preparing traffic for entry, and/or stations receiving messages (phone call or written matter) from a MARS user or message originator for introduction into the MARS system must use good judgment, common sense, and the guidelines contained herein relevant to creation and/or acceptance of messages for transmission via the MARS system. Each station should endeavor to receive and transmit (or relay, as needed) any message passed to it within a 24 hour time limit. This criteria is not only reasonable, but will prevent any unwarranted delays in the handling of MARS traffic, especially messages that are time sensitive. Numerous avenues are available to enable station compliance with this directive. The use of internet e-mail to send messages or broadcast is discouraged.
- 6.3. For message preparation see the AF MARS Training Manual.
- 6.4. Acceptance of messages for transmission over the MARS network is a responsibility that should not to be taken lightly. The operator receiving traffic for injection into the MARS system bears certain responsibilities relative to that action. Foremost of these is the in-station 24 hour handling time limit. Once a message that shouldn't be transmitted via MARS is accepted and sent anyway, it is an error on the part of the originating station. Once the message is accepted into the system, it must continue to flow until it reaches its destination or after sufficient attempts have failed; it is determined to be undeliverable. Therefore, the originating station operator is the individual who must utilize good judgment and the guidelines presented herein relative to acceptance of messages.
 - 6.4.1.1. The following categories of messages will not be accepted for transmission via the MARS network:
 - 6.4.1.2. Initial notification of death. Unless specifically addressed to the Red Cross, the Chaplain Service, or Commander, First Sergeant, etc initial notifications of death are not accepted.
 - 6.4.1.3. Messages in a foreign language. (Exception: Stations with overseas and overseas-to-CONUS operations may use languages other than English on MARS nets under certain conditions. The MARS station must get host-country approval before using another language. The Chief, USAF MARS and the overseas unit station wall maintain a file copy of this concurrence. At least one of the operators handling the traffic must be conversant in the language used. Otherwise, only individual words are allowed if they're commonly used and understood. E.g. a message shouldn't be refused because the sender ends it with an "Adios".)
 - 6.4.1.4. Nonsensical or whimsical messages.

- 6.4.1.5. Obscene, derogatory, or demeaning messages.
- 6.4.1.6. Messages bearing precedence higher than "Priority" (Exception: Military stations).
- 6.4.1.7. Business transactions (messages to mail order houses, banks, or to business firms requesting a product or service).
- 6.4.1.8. Classified, For Official Use Only (FOUO) or Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information.
- 6.4.1.9. Official traffic, regardless of the mode used, will not be entered into amateur nets for further transmission or relay for any reason.
- 6.4.1.10. Personal messages originated in the CONUS for CONUS delivery may be re-filed into the amateur system or serviced back to originator as undeliverable.
- 6.4.2. Refusal to accept a message must be accomplished in a tactful and courteous manner. The offer must be made to help the originator rewrite the message so it still conveys the writer's thoughts but satisfies the guidelines established in this MOI. If the sender is displeased and wishes to address this problem to a higher authority, he/ she should be advised to contact the USAF MARS office in writing, outlining his/her grievance.
- 6.4.3. Purifying the system of unauthorized messages: Messages that do not satisfy the acceptance criteria contained herein sometimes get into the system and are recognized by subsequent station operators as being in conflict with this MOI's provisions. The first relay station receiving such a message should accept it and request guidance from the NCS prior to relaying further. If guidance is still needed, contact the RMD by phone for additional guidance and advice on message routing and disposition. In no case, once traffic is in the system, will it be refused by an operator. This paragraph addresses the procedure for insuring control of erroneous or unauthorized messages after they have entered the MARS system.
- 6.4.4. Messages with minor but obvious errors should be serviced back to the originating station for corrections. However, if there are time constraints with the message, an operator's note may be used following the message to indicate that either the groups do not check or that a probable error exists. An operator's judgment comes into play here, but servicing the message should always be considered first.
- 6.5. For the purposes of reporting certain events and situations Essential Elements of Information (EEI) messages will be used. EEI messages are the one of the most useful services provided by MARS for the Director Of Military Support (DOMS) in Washington, DC. Refer to the AF MARS Emergency Communications Plan 2005-1, Dated 17 October 2005 on how to draft EEI messages.

CHAPTER 7 CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

- 7.1. MARS conferences and meetings are vital to the MARS program. They afford individual members and military/affiliate managers an opportunity to exchange information, discuss procedures, and clarify policy.
 - 7.1.1. Each region may schedule an annual MARS conference convened by the respective RMD. The participants will be affiliate members and appointed region/state officials. Region conferences are funded primarily by the affiliate members. A registration fee may be charged to help defray conference costs (military are not exempt). When a registration fee is charged, it will be computed to cover only the costs of conference facilities, refreshments, and other incidentals, without making a profit. Excess funds will be returned to the members in a form determined by the conference committee and RMD.
 - 7.1.2. State MARS directors may hold periodic meetings with their members. State meetings held in cities where it is not practical for the SMD to attend must be coordinated with the SMD to insure current information is obtained. Members are responsible for any expenses.
- 7.2. Conferences and meetings should be well planned. The number of attendees should be determined far enough in advance to find a suitable facility. The RMD will appoint a conference committee who will work out the details for the affiliate region conferences. A definite agenda is required so the proceedings will be effectively conducted.
 - 7.2.1. Region conferences are scheduled for a three day weekend (Friday through Sunday.). An officials meeting chaired by the RMD may be scheduled for Friday evening.
 - 7.2.2. A conference committee shall consist of (as a minimum) a conference chairperson, treasurer, recorder, and publicity manager. These personnel, appointed by the individuals convening the conference, are responsible for all conference administrative details.
- 7.3. Items for discussion should be solicited from the general membership through management channels. Selected subjects will be listed with a brief background and recommendation (as a basis for discussion). Each item will be listed on the conference schedule with an assigned time limit. The conference schedule should begin with opening remarks and pertinent introductions by the convening authority, followed by reports from appropriate officials. USAF MARS presentation should be scheduled to allow sufficient time for any questions and answers. The remainder of the schedule will consist of agenda items. If time permits, seminars on special presentations may be scheduled. A social, such as a banquet or dinner, may be incorporated, with expenses borne by attendees. Each conference agenda will be coordinated with the Chief, USAF MARS.
- 7.4. Conference events will be controlled by the conference chairperson. If agenda items are covered well and kept within their allotted time, the conference will run smoothly. Appropriate recognition, such as certificates, plaques, and/or other awards, will be presented at

the banquet/dinner, if scheduled. Otherwise, they may be presented at an appropriate time during the conference.

- 7.5. MARS meetings are conducted more informally than a conference. However, meetings should be planned with an outline for discussion. Current information should be obtained from the SMD or IMD for dissemination to members. Awards may be presented with the concurrence of the SMD or IMD, as appropriate. Full quarter participation time will be credited for region conference attendees. Three (3) hours of participation time will be given for local/state meetings.

CHAPTER 8 HF VOICE NETWORK

- 8.1 To establish a uniform process for the operation of the voice REGIONAL, and TRANSCON networks for the support of MAJCOM contingency plans.
 - 8.1.1. The TRANSCON voice network covers the 48 contiguous states, and is the backbone of the MARS HF radio system into which all other MARS nets may enter. It is used to forward traffic throughout each of the USAF MARS Regions
 - 8.1.2. Region networks are nets serving the respective states and military installations within specified boundaries. Each USAF MARS region has a separate net. They provide intra-regional HF radio communications support.
- 8.2. Standard radiotelephone training is contained in the AF MARS Training Manual.
 - 8.2.1. Stations having inter-regional traffic will call the TRANSCON NCS and list the traffic by number and precedence. NCS will then acknowledge each station's check in and record the traffic. Every effort will be made by the NCS to handle the traffic as rapidly as possible. NCS will also query the net hourly at a randomly scheduled roll call, allowing stations the chance to mass any traffic they're holding. When a station checks into the net, it will respond to radio checks at certain times (on the hour and half hour, unless traffic is being passed), or until that station requests to close.
 - 8.2.2. To expedite the flow of traffic, all messages will be passed on a frequency designated by the NCS.
 - 8.2.3. Traffic handling will be done by the joint precedence system. Official traffic is to be processed ahead of non-official messages. If the net is busy, stations indicating they are ready to handle listed traffic will be directed to an adjacent (traffic) frequency by the NCS. Following completion of these stations, traffic passing they will report back on the calling frequency.
- 8.3. The NCS will open the net each day. He/She will keep a record of each station checking in, showing its location (should assistance be needed). When is traffic listed, the NCS will designate stations to receive the messages. NCS will poll stations to list traffic at least once each hour during a designated roll call. Every effort will be made to handle traffic as expeditiously as possible.
- 8.4. All USAF MARS stations will contact the NCS to check in/out of the net. If the NCS does not respond, other USAF MARS stations already checked into the net will relay the request at the next possible time.
- 8.5. Each Regional NCS will be responsible to forward MARS participation time to their respective Region Voice Network Official (AFFxN).

8.6. Each TRANSCON NCS will be responsible to forward MARS participation time to the National Voice Network Manager (AFNxVN).

8.7. The National Voice Network Manager will consolidate all reports from the TRANSCON NCSs and forward the reports to the respective Regional Operations Analysis Manager (AFFxO).

8.8. Any recent MARS broadcast messages will be transmitted by the NCS or another designated station on Transcon or region frequencies at least once per week per net session.

CHAPTER 9 PHONE PATCH NETWORK

- 9.1. The phone patch network provides pilots and aircrews in flight a chance to make an official phone patch via an authorized USAF MARS phone patch station.
- 9.2. MARS phone patch networks are closed nets requiring specific assignment AF Form 3661 action. Assignment to these networks will be made by the National Phone Patch Manager in response to an affiliate's phone patch net application from their SMD. The member's SMD then coordinates the member's acceptance to the net with the phone patch manager.
- 9.3. There are special requirements which each affiliate station must meet prior to being assigned to a phone patch network.
 - 9.3.1. Be capable of operating on assigned network frequencies.
 - 9.3.2. Have RF output power and antennas capable of phone patch operations. Normally a one kilowatt amplifier and a directional antenna are desired.
 - 9.3.3. Be willing to dedicate time in excess of the minimum MARS activity requirement.
- 9.4. Checking into or out of a net will be accomplished only when the circuit is free of traffic being passed. The station checking in/out will call the NCS. If the NCS does not respond, stations already checked into the net will relay the request at the next possible time.
- 9.5. To the greatest extent possible, phone patches will be rotated among stations that are operating on the net. Maximum participation by all net members is desired to enhance training and their ability to respond in times of emergency. To this end, all stations should have equal access in handling the available traffic.
- 9.6. Phone patch net participation will be reported quarterly. NCS will forward all MARS station participation time to the National Phone Patch Manager for consolidation. The National Phone Patch Manager will then forward the participation report to each Regional Operations Analysis Manager.
- 9.7. The USAF MARS operator on each end of the circuit is responsible for proper operation of the phone patch. Specific procedures are as follows:
 - 9.7.1. Most phone patches are made by reversing the charges (i.e. collect). Occasionally the calling party may request billing to a third party or credit card. While these are allowed, operators are cautioned to maintain an accurate log. A log will assist in answering any questions that may arise about payment of long distance charges. Often, a commercial long distance service, (Sprint, MCI, etc.) may prepay for phone patches during selected periods. The phone patch manager will provide necessary information for this service to his/her net members. Telephone access info from the net manager must be treated as close-hold (non-releasable) information, since illegal or unauthorized use of it could result in the loss of this

free service. The bottom line is: while USAF MARS provides free morale/welfare calls, this 'free' service refers to the part of the call that is transmitted over the radio. At no time will the cost of a morale/welfare phone call be charged to the USAF MARS Office or the government.

- 9.7.2. Instruction on phone patch procedures is usually required before the patch can be initiated. The called party will be advised in the use of the proword "OVER" and the circuit's unclassified status. Unless specified by the net manager or NCS, operators should brief the calling and called parties that the circuit is not secure and not to discuss items of a classified nature. They should be told that only one person can talk at a time, and that the phone patch will be limited in time.
- 9.7.3. Only prowords and abbreviations authorized for USAF MARS may be used. Those developed in other services/systems (e.g. Citizens Band, Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL), etc.) are not authorized. When approved prowords don't exist to express an action/function, plain English will be used (e.g. 'no answer' is acceptable, while 'DNA' is not).
- 9.7.4. Phone patches are normally limited to five minutes. Operators may extend this time limit, depending on circuit traffic load and/or importance of the call. Responsibility for enforcing the time limit rests with the initiating station.
- 9.7.5. A phone patch usually follows the sequence given below. Slight deviations may occur depending on the specific circumstances of the patch.
 - 9.7.5.1. The initiating station will list the patch with the NCS. Several patches may be listed at one time to expedite operations.
 - 9.7.5.2. When it is the initiating station's turn, the NCS will advise the initiator to conduct their patch (es) with the other station.
 - 9.7.5.3. The initiating station will call the receiving station and conduct a signal check. If patch quality exists in both directions, the patch will be conducted.
 - 9.7.5.4. Completion of the patch will be reported to the NCS.

NOTE: The NCS will process phone patch traffic on a basis of precedence (i.e. Immediate, Priority, and Routine). Messages of the same precedence will be processed on a first-in, first-out basis (this depends on availability of other net member stations also).

9.8. Affiliate stations will log all phone patch operations. In addition to other MARS logging requirements, the phone patch log will contain the following information:

- 9.8.1. Station call sign.
- 9.8.2. Name of person for whom the patch was performed and who was called.

9.8.3. Phone number called and phone number/credit card number of the caller (if billing will be to other than the number called).

9.8.4. Specific information about the patch (what the patch was for).

9.8.5. Time, date, and frequency of the patch.

9.8.6. Any additional data as determined.

9.9. Discussion of classified information during a MARS phone patch is not authorized. MARS operators are not expected to determine the classified nature of phone patch conversations and will not terminate patches when suspected violations occur. They should bring the information to the attention of the NCS. To preclude occurrences of this nature, the initiating and receiving parties will be briefed on the insecurity of USAF MARS phone patch circuits prior to the patch being initiated.

CHAPTER 10
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT

- 10.1. The purpose is to establish emergency communications support procedures, assure coordination of USAF MARS operations with military or civil Disaster Response Forces.
- 10.2. The USAF MARS Emergency Communications (ECOM) Plan 2005-1, dated 17 Oct 2005 was developed to outline the utilization of USAF MARS in support of the Disaster Response Forces. It also provides specific actions for USAF MARS stations to take in support of disaster response communications requirements.
- 10.3. For a copy of the ECOM plan contact the respective Region (AFFxE), or National (AFNxEC) ECOM Manager, or the USAF MARS Office.

CHAPTER 11 NET CONTINUITY CHECKS

- 11.1. It is essential that NCS operators know which participating stations are available when a traffic/contingency net is in progress. Periodic continuity checks reveal that the NCS and net participants have contact established with one another, or that propagation conditions or equipment problems have made contact between them unreliable or nonexistent. The lack of a useful radio path will normally lead to a frequency change or an outage entry in the radio log. In VHF operation, propagation variables are not usually major problems. However, many participating VHF net stations are mobile or transportable, and are sometimes either shielded for a time by terrain, foliage, or man-made obstructions; or they move outside repeater or net stations' coverage range. This may cause temporary loss of contact with other net stations. These factors make it necessary that some method be employed to determine if HF and VHF net stations are available to accept traffic, or respond to contingency instructions during certain defined net operation periods.
- 11.2. A continuity check will be conducted at random times hourly during net operations selected by NCS. The reason for making the check at a random time is so that station operators can not leave their radio between checks and still claim participation credit for the entire session. If traffic is in progress at the scheduled check time the check will be conducted immediately after traffic passing is completed. If traffic load is heavy, a continuity check at that particular time may be preempted at the NCS' discretion. However, precluding emergencies or traffic priority, a minimum of one continuity check (and polling of stations to list traffic) will be made each hour. This will ascertain the quality of all stations on the net, and allow the NCS to know which stations have traffic to pass.
- 11.3. All MARS nets will be logged, showing each affiliate station that has checked into the net, their location (HF = City and State, VHF = City), time checking into the net, time checking out of the net, and any traffic they may have. All net continuity checks will also be logged.
- 11.4. The following operating procedures will be used when performing continuity checks:
- 11.4.1. The NCS advises all net stations that there will be a call and radio check. The NCS calls each station (one at a time) that has checked into the net. When called, each station responds by giving a signal report. The NCS acknowledges by responding with a signal report, and then calls the next station, etc. At the conclusion of the continuity checks, the NCS asks if there are stations to be recognized. If stations respond, he/she checks them in. If there is no response, the NCS will poll for any traffic to be listed.
- 11.4.2. If an affiliate station does not respond to a roll call, the NCS will attempt contact the affiliate station at the end of roll call. If there is still no response, the station will be shown on the radio log as closed. The participation time will cease when the affiliate's station is closed. If the station rejoins the net later, a new period of participation credit starts at that point.
- 11.5. NCS' should utilize FYMONs to the fullest extent possible.

11.6. At the end of each quarter, NCSs will formulate each member's participation time and forward it to the National Manager or the ROAM (which ever is applicable) for the quarterly report.

CHAPTER 12 VHF NETWORK

- 12.1. USAF MARS has no requirement to develop extensive VHF voice or digital networks to pass traffic. Each VHF operator must possess the capability to operate on HF region nets (a DoD prime directive). VHF may be used for local MARS training, local traffic handling, local area emergency support, and to complement HF operations.
- 12.2. Affiliate VHF operations are under the purview of the SMD. On military installations where government equipment is installed, VHF operations will be controlled by the IMD. Linked and interstate repeaters and data network stations are managed by cooperation of the SMDs involved.
- 12.2.1. The SMD will provide a net designator prior to establishing a VHF voice net.
- 12.2.2. Each VHF voice net will have a net manager, appointed by the SMD. The SMD will certify the appointment on an AF Form 3661.
- 12.2.3. VHF voice net managers will maintain an accurate record of affiliate participation. Net member participation time(s) will be forwarded to the respective ROAM or his/her designated representative.
- 12.2.4. VHF voice net managers will insure a NCS is designated for each net session.
- 12.2.5. VHF voice net NCS' will designate an HF equipped net member to perform as a liaison between the VHF net operating stations and the region HF traffic net.
- 12.2.6. The designated HF liaison station will advise the region HF NCS, he/she is liaison for the (net designator) VHF net, the VHF net's area of coverage, and whether or not they are currently in session.
- 12.3. Requests for repeater or digital repeater (digipeater) usage on VHF nets are processed by using a Repeater/Digipeater Application form, obtained from the USAF MARS Office (see note below). All requests must be submitted through the respective SMD and RMD who will forward them to USAF MARS. Applications must be completed in their entirety (include a map showing the location, and expected radius of coverage).

NOTE: Nodes may or may not be classified as digipeaters. However for simplicity within this MOI, when the term "digipeater" is discussed, "nodes" are included. The term "digipeater" used here is defined as any digital relay station without BBS functionality and where affiliates are not using the same equipment to connect to other digital stations.)

- 12.3.1. Applications for new repeaters or digipeater on military installations must be coordinated through the Installation Spectrum Manager and the appropriate MAJCOM Spectrum Manager before they are forwarded to the USAF MARS office for processing.

12.4. The USAF MARS office is the sole office for processing repeater/digitpeater applications to the Air Force Frequency Management Agency, (AFFMA) Washington, DC. Where possible frequency overlap exists, USAF MARS will direct and establish frequency/time-sharing arrangements or approve secondary-pair operation.

12.5. Repeater/Digipeater owners

12.5.1. Ensure the repeater operates within the constraints (power limitations, emission characteristics, etc.) of the frequency license, and this MOI.

12.5.2. Are responsible for the drafting and execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the repeater/digipeater owner and the facilities manager (and/or other designated individuals), if required. If a MOA is not required, the repeater/digitpeater owner is still responsible for the contents noted in the sub paragraph of paragraph 12.5.2. MOAs should include (but not limited to):

Note: Legal assistance is suggested when drafting an MOA.

12.5.2.1. Written coordination with the appropriate personnel to ensure the proposed repeater station will not impact other operations within area of the facility.

12.5.2.2. Who is responsible for the maintenance, procurement and cost associated with the repeater/digipeater and the facility? This also includes any cost that could be incurred from the facilities manager.

12.5.2.3. Who is responsible for the cost of any insurance or utility bills as required by the facilities manager?

12.5.2.4. Obtain approval to operate on USAF MARS frequencies prior to using the station.

12.5.2.7. A way of contacting the repeater/digipeater owner incase of problems.

12.5.3. Are responsible for finding an alternative location for the equipment if told to remove equipment. This includes the relocation of equipment on a military installation.

12.5.4. Coordinate with the facilities manager prior to installation of any equipment.

12.6. When a repeater/digipeater requirement no longer exists, the repeater manager will send a request for termination of registration to USAF MARS.

12.7. A VHF repeater station may consist of either a VHF repeater, digital repeater, linking control/interface equipment, or a combination of items. Radio frequencies, emission authorizations, and limitations relevant to each repeater station are assigned by USAF MARS as part of the station license.

- 12.8. Any VHF operations will be frequency modulated (FM). If four (4) or fewer stations regularly check into a net, the SMD can take action to terminate the net. Affiliate member VHF net participation credit will be granted only when a region HF traffic net liaison station is operating during the VHF sessions. Repeaters may be temporally linked to pass traffic. The link will be deactivated after traffic passing is complete.
- 12.9. Army and Navy-Marine Corps MARS are authorized to share USAF VHF MARS resources under the following conditions:
 - 12.9.1. For the express purpose of expediting delivery of MARS messages traffic when normal in-service means are not readily available.
 - 12.9.2. Prior mutual agreements and coordination between Army, Air Force, Navy-Marine, state directors/coordinators, as appropriate.
 - 12.9.3. Shared use of other services' repeaters will be on a non-interference basis (NIB).
- 12.10. See Chapter 13 regarding sending the identifying call sign for digipeaters.

**CHAPTER 13
CALL SIGNS**

13.1. USAF MARS call signs are geographically derived, from a block of internationally recognized call signs allocated to the USAF by NTIA. The FCC manages the geographical call sign program for the US. Call signs coming from these national blocks were further portioned out, resulting in the call signs currently employed by the USAF MARS program.

13.2. The USAF MARS Office is responsible for and issues USAF MARS call signs. Call signs are derived from a number, 1 through 9, denoting the region where the station is located.

Region	States
1	CT, DE, IN, ME, MD (including DC), MA, MI, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT
2	AL, FL (incl PR), GA, TN, KY, WV, VA, NC, SC
3	ND, SD, NE, KS, MO, MN, IA, WI, IL
4	OK, TX, AR, LA, MS
5	WA, OR, ID, MN, CO, WY, UT
6	CA, NV, AZ, NM
8	HI, GUAM
9	AK

13.3. Military Unit Stations consist of the letters "AGA", followed by two alphabetic digits, normally associated with the letters of the station's name (e.g. AGA4TI - Tinker AFB, OK). The first initial of each name in a dual named base is normally used (e.g. AGA6DM - Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ.).

13.3.1. All Military Unit call signs are issued only by the Chief, USAF MARS. They are multi operator call signs, and request for them will be submitted through appropriate military channels to the Chief, USAF MARS.

13.4. The Chief, USAF MARS (AGA3C) is the only person on the USAF MARS Staff to receive a call sign.

13.5. Affiliate station call sign assignments are delegated to the RMD. These are single operator calls consisting of the letters "AF", a third letter (either "A" or "T"), a number 0 through 9 for the respective region, and finally, two letters "AA" through "ZZ." Call signs

with a "T" as the third letter denote a person in training (e.g. AFT2GO). This call sign is changed once the person has certified from Trainee to Qualified in MARS (within 180 days).

13.5.1. Other than training status changes, designated call signs will not change unless the member moves to another MARS region.

13.6. All National billet call signs are issued by the Chief, USAF MARS. They are single operator call signs, and requests for them should be submitted through appropriate channels to the Chief, USAF MARS.

Call sign	National Appointment
AFNxEC	National Emergency Coordinator
AFN×VN	National Voice Network Manager
AFN×AT	National Data Network Manager
AFN×AC	National Phone Patch Manager
AFN×AL	National ALE Manager
AFN×TD	National Training Manager

13.7. Region officials will have a prefix of “AFF”, a region number indicating which region they are appointed for, and a one letter suffix indicating the position they hold. Personnel assigned region billet call signs will employ them within their region only and in the performance of their official duties on MARS frequencies. Billet calls will not be used on other service’s MARS nets or frequencies.

Call sign	Region Appointments
AFF×C	MARS Director
AFF×D	Deputy MARS Director
AFF×E	Emergency Coordinator
AFF×F	Frequency Monitor Manager
AFF×K	Digital Network Manager
AFF×N	Voice Net Manager
AFF×O	Operations manager

Call sign	Region Appointments
AFFxP	Public Affairs Coordinator
AFFxT	Training Manager

13.8. SMDs will have a prefix of "AFF", a Region number indicating their location, and a two letter suffix (using state codes used by the US Postal System) indicating the state in which they serve. Personnel assigned SMD billet call signs will employ them within their region only and in the performance of their official duties on MARS frequencies.

13.9. National/Regional/State official billet call signs remain with the position as assigned on their AF Form 3661.

13.10. Participation time may only be credited to the affiliate call sign, not the National/Regional/State call sign. All participation reports must reflect this.

13.11. MARS call signs will not be suffixed except as authorized in this MOI. Military unit stations may use the suffix Unit 1, Unit 2, etc., to denote sub-unit stations of the parent organization. Affiliate MARS stations will not use the suffixes "mobile" or "transportable" Use of these terms confuse many members and serves no real purpose. The term "Portable" is not recognized by the AFFMA in Washington, D.C., and will also not be used on MARS frequencies.

13.12. MARS call signs will be used only on MARS networks.

13.13. MARS call signs will not be used on other military networks (other MARS Services Nets are exempt where authorized) or deployed as representatives of that station (using suffixes where applicable). Whenever a transmission is made, the station making the transmission must be identified as the source. An affiliate member's personal MARS call sign will not be used unless they are operating in their own station.

13.14. The following chart is a listing of the current Secondary Station Identifiers (SSIDs) applies to packet stations. Changes regarding packet may be made upon approval from the National Data Network Manager. An example of an SSID is AFA3XB-3.

SSID	Used by
0	Standard keyboard operation from a MARS member's home station location.
3	Authorized unattended digipeaters/nodes.
4	Authorized VHF BBSs.

SSID	Used by
15	Personal BBS such as those within a TNC that do not immediately store incoming messages on floppy or hard disk media. Third party or record traffic will not be auto-forwarded to this type of BBS due to message volatility.

13.14.1. All packet BBSs/digitpeaters should broadcast the call sign used to connect to and the location of the transmitter.

13.15. The use of Automatic Linking Establishment (ALE) identifiers must be used while operating ALE.

CHAPTER 14 DATA NETWORKS

- 14.1. To establish policy, technical standards, and procedures for use of digital radio modes to access automatic computer-based bulletin board systems (BBSs) arranged in a network. Automatic message storage and forwarding are already developed to facilitate error-free automated message handling without human operator intervention.
- 14.2. Radio data networks will be primarily utilized on USAF MARS HF frequencies to support the USAF MARS mission. VHF may be utilized to enhance the HF radio data networks. Use of the data network is open to military unit stations and affiliate members, except those in training. All operations are supervised by the National Data Manager and the Region Data Network managers.
- 14.3. A member interested in having his/her station become a part of the Data Network must commit to 24 hour per day operation and be capable of operating and maintaining the required stability on the network operating frequencies as designated by the National/Region Data Manager.
 - 14.3.1. The candidate must be prepared to interface with appropriate region networks in order to expeditiously move incoming traffic toward its destination in accordance with current MARS operating instructions.
 - 14.3.2. An application to participate in the network operation must be forwarded to the National Data Manager for approval and assignment.
 - 14.3.3. Each system operator (SYSOP) will be expected to regularly check his/her BBS system to insure that traffic is flowing in an expeditious manner. The SYSOP will be responsible for readdressing any traffic not being so forwarded. Traffic which is not forwarded promptly will be removed from the BBS and refilled into a voice or other network as applicable to that message's final destination. The time for a message to remain in-station shall not exceed 24 hours, including the time required to refile and retransmit on an alternate mode. Sysops not found diligent will be advised and given ample opportunity to amend their methods. They will be dropped from the roster only if they are unable to correct their errors within a reasonable time.
- 14.4. The Data Network structure shall consist of a single, open, automated message and distribution system utilizing members, radio equipment, and software capable of operating on USAF MARS frequencies. Stations within the Data Network will consist of three categories: Gateway Message Centers, Regional Message Centers, and Support Centers.
 - 14.4.1. The Gateway Message Center's principal function is to provide a central forwarding, collection and distribution level for the regions and provide gateways to other services in compliance with the interoperability agreement. Gateway Message Centers are established by the National Data Manager and shall be geographically located throughout the CONUS to provided optimum coverage. They shall be capable of scanning most of the digital

frequencies. The Gateway Message Centers are to provide the most rapid delivery of traffic to other BBS's within their respective region and other region message centers to receive/send region-to-region relay or delivery of traffic.

14.4.2. The Regional Message Center's principal function is to provide a central forwarding, collection and distribution level within the regions and to provide Gateway Message Center's an alternate traffic route if required. They shall be capable of scanning at least two of the digital frequencies.

14.4.3. Support Center's principal function is to established relay traffic to and from individual members on an automated basis destined either within the region or out-of-region. Support Center's are not required to scan multiple frequencies but will be accommodated by schedule if needed, or by manual operation on a random basis at the SYSOPS discretion.

14.5. The National Data Manager shall allocate and assign frequencies as equitably and efficiently as possible to optimize use within the National Data Network. The frequency sharing plan will make use of one or more of the following methods:

14.5.1. Geographical sharing: Use of the same frequency in more than one geographical area.

14.5.2. Time sharing: Require that stations operate on a forwarding schedule.

14.6. Role of VHF. Region data networks may employ VHF BBS stations, digipeaters, and nodes as well as the HF technologies used by the National Data Network. When advantageous for reasons of geography, distance, and propagation, VHF links may operate across state lines with no special permission required beyond that of the relevant SMDs, provided such operation does not cross into another region. All VHF BBS stations must provide some type of connection to the HF Data Network.

14.6.1. Digital operations are specifically prohibited from using VHF voice repeater frequencies.

14.7. Several types of terminal software are available to USAF MARS operators. There is no prescribed software for the individual member, and no single program that universally suits every member.

14.8. All USAF MARS auto-forwarding systems must use software compatible with the other MARS services. Personal electronic mailboxes (non-disk based mailboxes such as those built into a TNC) are not to be used for traffic requiring further radio communications relay. This feature is only to be used for receiving messages that do not need to go further electronically.

14.8.1. MSYS, WINLINK, AIRMAIL and JNOS are examples of BBS Mailbox software in the existing USAF MARS data networks.

14.9. In order to preserve network integrity and afford network users appropriate routing information, all bulletin boards and digipeaters are required to be registered with the National

Data Network Manager. National Data Network Manager will forward a list of registered BBSs and digipeaters to the USAF MARS Office. Stand-alone digipeaters are to be properly licensed through the USAF MARS Office (see Chapter 12). There is no special registration required for stations that merely connect to the BBS stations.

CHAPTER 15

AUTOMATIC LINKING ESTABLISHMENT (ALE)

15.1. Automatic Link Establishment (ALE) is an HF Transcon Net where participating stations have radio equipment designed to ascertain automatically the highest quality reliability of linking together two or more stations operating on the same frequency, given a group of frequencies customarily in different bands, therefore accommodating changes in day, night, and solar cycle propagation, and other propagation anomalies. The ALE function is limited to this, and then the station operators select a mode of communication, voice (SSB), or from various authorized data modes, and communicate either automatically or manually with each other and to send and receive messages. This is a special net. The particular modes of data protocol are determined by the TRANSCON ALE Net Manager. Modes may be singular point to point, or grouped data modes with interactive automated functions. Grouped data may be networked automatically for message forwarding and reverse forwarding. A dedicated routing backbone may be used, or a randomized routing based upon active connections, where stations may manually or automatically relay in a source origin to target delivery or posting configuration. The ALE data network may automatically interface with other MARS data networks.

15.2. ALE is available in either firmware manufactured radios, or ALE in software to function add-on to other CAT-capable manufactured radios. A special version of this software was developed by the joint MARS ALE Software Development Team (SDT) which conforms to MIL-STD-188. The primary mode of TRANSCON ALE communications is data. The secondary communication mode is SSB.

15.3. Each Air Force MARS member participating on TRANSCON ALE nets, must submit a request for an ALE identifier with the TRANSCON ALE Manager prior to transmitting on the ALE nets. The TRANSCON ALE Manager will submit all requests to the Chief, USAF MARS for registering with the Air Force Frequency Management Agency.

CHAPTER 16 INTEROPERABILITY WITH OTHER MARS BRANCHES

- 16.1. The purpose of this chapter is to establish uniform procedures, policy, and standards for operation between members of the three branches of MARS at the state and region level. The contents of this chapter have been coordinated among all three service Chiefs. There is effectively a single MARS system, with three branches. Organizational differences should not get in the way of providing communication where it is needed.
- 16.2. Army and Air Force MARS began full interoperability on all circuits in April 1997. Army and Air Force MARS interoperability with Navy-Marine Corps MARS is limited only by Navy-Marine Corps MARS frequencies not being authorized on a nationwide basis.
- 16.3. All service MARS interoperability is authorized on a nationwide basis subject to the following restrictions:
 - 16.3.1. All service MARS stations are authorized to use any VHF circuits for digital and voice communications within the host service's established guidelines.
 - 16.3.2. All service MARS stations are authorized to enter any Army or Air Force MARS HF traffic net.
 - 16.3.3. All Army and Air Force MARS stations are authorized to enter any Navy-Marine Corps MARS area (state) or region traffic net as long as they are located within the borders of the Navy-Marine Corps MARS region in which the net is being operated.
 - 16.3.4. All service MARS stations are authorized to enter any service MARS emergency communications net during an actual emergency.
 - 16.3.5. This interoperability does not apply to HF phone patch nets to and from Navy and Coast Guard ships, or Air Force aircraft. Operations for these units are restricted to Navy-Marine Corps MARS stations in the case of ships, and Air Force MARS in the case of USAF aircraft.
- 16.4. All three services have basically the same message format, however there are minor differences. The following guidance is provided:
 - 16.4.1. Message precedence will not be changed.
 - 16.4.2. Any other changes to message heading needed to comply with another service's policies or procedures will be made by the receiving station. Under no circumstances will the text of any message be altered, except by the originator.
- 16.5. The host service will supply the net control station that is the governing authority on all procedures. Host net procedures will be observed without comment or debate. If the guest is unwilling to follow the host procedures, a tactful withdrawal from the frequency is

recommended. USAF MARS members are authorized only to use their personal MARS call sign on Army or Navy-Marine Corps frequencies. Official call signs will not be used.

CHAPTER 17

FREQUENCY MEASUREMENT AND MONITORING

17.1. It is the responsibility of each individual USAF MARS station to ensure their station is within the specifications set by USAF MARS. However, there are times when some assistance is needed. Thus, the primary mission of the FYMON Program is to provide a self-policing capability for USAF MARS frequencies. It should provide an accurate means of setting net frequencies and fostering compliance with operating directives. Each appointed FYMON station will have the ability to observe and measure basic signal parameters, report instances of below standard operation, and assist in correcting discrepancies. The result is a program that maintains circuit discipline and system integrity.

17.2. Each region's RMD is responsible for the establishment and support of a FYMON program. A Chief FYMON, who will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the FYMON program in his/her region, will be appointed by the RMD.

17.3. The Chief FYMON may appoint frequency monitors, train them, assign them to a specific net, and insure state-of-the-art techniques for frequency measuring and monitoring are employed. Individual frequency monitors are responsible for meeting net assignments, maintaining equipment within required tolerances, and providing reports as required.

17.3.1. Any trained USAF MARS member may apply to participate in the FYMON program. Eligibility for appointment as a FYMON is based on the applicant's qualifications, experience, and measuring and monitoring equipment capability. The applicant's availability and HF frequency usage agility are also weighted factors. When the Chief FYMON determines the applicant is eligible and equipped to function as a FYMON, he/she will prepare an AF Form 3661 appoint that station as a FYMON.

17.4. When a FYMON checks in to a net, it is their responsibility to ensure frequency accuracy. All NCSs are required to check with a FYMON to ensure their station is accurate prior to, or at the beginning of each net. When a station is not within tolerance, the NCS will be responsible to bring that station on frequency. The FYMON's may submit a letter of infraction to the station if they are not in compliance, or don't take immediate action to correct a problem.

17.4.1. A letter of infraction will be used to notify a MARS operator of noncompliance with current USAF MARS directives. RMDs, SMDs and USAF MARS Office will receive copies of all letters of infractions.

CHAPTER 18
SURPLUS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

18.1. One of the benefits of being a part of the USAF MARS program is the ability to obtain surplus property from the Defense Reutilization Marketing Office (DRMO). This MOI establishes the procedures for acquiring property, including: the initial screening, requesting, and requisitioning.

NOTE: The acquisition of government surplus property is a privilege, and can be refused at anytime by the USAF MARS Office for any legitimate reason.

18.2. The Chief, USAF MARS may appoint a federal employee to serve as USAF MARS Property Officer. This employee is responsible for providing guidance and procedures to USAF MARS members for receiving, transferring, or turning in excess/surplus government assets.

18.2. All transactions related to government surplus equipment in the USAF MARS program must be approved by the USAF MARS Property Officer and/or Chief, USAF MARS.

18.3. Government surplus property issued to affiliate members continues to be government-owned property and must be safeguarded from misuse, loss, theft, or damage. All records and documents supporting MARS property transactions are subject to inspection, audit, and maintenance/disposition as prescribed by AFI 23-110, *USAF Standard Supply Procedures*.

18.4. The USAF MARS Property Officer will maintain necessary files and records to establish a complete audit trail for all MARS property. Electronic software may be used in place of hard paper copies. As a minimum, the files outlined below will be kept.

18.4.1. Member files. These files contain copies of signed inventories, issue requests (DD Form 1348-1a), issue documents, transfers between members (DD Form 1150), turn-ins, approved cannibalization requests, and related documents relevant to all property issued to a particular member.

18.4.2. Suspense file. A copy of each request document approved by the USAF MARS Property Officer (w/ an assigned a control number) will be kept until a signed document is received acknowledging receipt of equipment.

18.4.3. Equipment request back-order file. Individual member's requests for equipment, that cannot be filled immediately, will be maintained and filed by item requested. Requests not filled within one year will be returned to the member. If the item is still required, a new request may be submitted at that time.

18.5. USAF MARS members must have completed training and have been highly active for at least two consecutive quarters, before requesting equipment.

18.6. Any USAF MARS member with a valid AF Form 3666 (MARS ID card) is permitted to screen excess/surplus government property for use in supporting the USAF MARS program. A list of Federal Supply Classification (FSC) groups authorized for USAF MARS member requisition is contained in table 18-1.

Table 18-1 - Federal Supply Classification Codes (FSC)

3610	Printing, Duplicating, and Bookbinding Equipment (MARS Officials Only)
5445	Prefabricated Tower Structures
5820	Radio and Television Communications Equipment, Except Airborne (Radios are limited to NTIA compliant only)
5821	Radio and Television Communications Equipment, Airborne (Radios are limited to NTIA compliant only)
5985	Antennas, Wave Guides and Related Equipment
6115	Generators and Generator Sets, Electrical (15KW or less)
6117	Solar Electric Power Systems
6150	Misc. Electric Power and Distribution Equipment (Relating to Communications Equipment)
6625	Electrical and Electronic Properties Measuring and Testing Equipment
7010	Automatic Data Processing Equipment (ADPE) System Configuration
7020	ADP Central Processing Unit (CPU, Computer), Analog
7021	ADP Central Processing Unit (CPU, Computer), Digital
7022	ADP Central Processing Unit (CPU, Computer), Hybrid
7025	ADP Input/Output and Storage Devices
7030	ADP Software
7035	ADP Support Equipment
7045	ADP Supplies
7050	ADP Components

NOTE: Only equipment which clearly meets MARS requirements will be approved.

18.7. All excess/surplus property requisitioned by USAF MARS members will be for immediate use in its intended purpose by a MARS member. Property will not be acquired for storage (to be used later). Nor will property be acquired by one person only to issue out to other USAF MARS members as the need arises.

18.8. It is the responsibility of the USAF MARS member to locate their own equipment. When equipment is located:

18.8.1. USAF MARS member will properly fill out a DRMS Form 103, *Screener's Tally Request to Freeze Excess/Surplus Property* and an *Equipment Request Form*, and then send to their SMD for approval.

18.8.2. SMDs will annotate their approval/disapproval, along with the number of hours they had for the past two quarter, and then forward the request to USAF MARS Office.

18.8.3. When requests for equipment are approved by the USAF MARS Office, the member will be notified.

18.8.3.1. The member is responsible to arrange for pickup of the equipment themselves. The USAF MARS Office will not pay for any shipping charges, nor will not arrange for the shipping of any asset that does not fall in DRMS Guidelines.

18.8.3.2. A member may authorize another individual to pick-up the property for him/her. The USAF MARS Office must be notified of this arrangement prior to submitting any equipment request.

18.8.3.3. Submit the signed DD Form 1348-1a to the USAF MARS Office for processing. Copies will be in each member's active file, until the annual inventory is accomplished.

18.9. Members can be denied equipment request based on:

18.9.1. Not strong enough justification as annotated on the Equipment Request form. Statements such as "to enhance my station's capability," "to fulfill the USAF MARS mission," are examples of a general justification and will not be accepted.

18.9.2. Improperly filled out equipment request form and DRMS Form 103.

18.9.3. Members who do not have the minimum 12 hours of participation time for the past two consecutive quarters.

18.9.4. Members who violate guidelines set by this operating instruction and other publications governing USAF MARS.

18.9.5. Not forwarding signed copies of DD Form 1348-1a or DD Form 1150 acknowledging receipt of excess/surplus equipment from DRMO to the USAF MARS Office.

18.9.6. Not signing for their existing equipment account.

18.9.7. Any dispute between USAF MARS members over government surplus equipment.

18.9.8. Any other reason as deemed appropriate by the USAF MARS Office.

18.10. Members who fail to pick-up equipment, or violate any rules set by the USAF MARS Property Officer, may render themselves ineligible to receive government surplus property for a specified time period set by the USAF MARS Office.

18.11. Equipment issued to a member who no longer needs it may be transferred to another eligible USAF MARS member. Shipping costs will be borne by the member(s). Members

desiring to transfer equipment will coordinate all actions with the respective SMDs, prepare DD Form 1150 (five copies; one for gaining member, one for losing member, one for each SMD involved, one for the USAF MARS Office), sign the DD Form 1150, and send them to the USAF MARS Office for action. Copies will be filed in each member's active file, until the annual inventory is accomplished.

- 18.12. In the event issued government surplus equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged, the member will submit a letter to the USAF MARS Office, itemizing the property involved, and explain, in detail, the circumstances under which the event occurred. Local law enforcement authorities will be notified in the case of theft. A copy of the investigation report will be sent to USAF MARS Office.
- 18.13. All efforts will be made by members to turn-in equipment back into their closest DRMO office when the equipment no longer can perform the MARS Mission, or when the Member no longer has a need for the equipment. There may be times when it is not economically feasible to turn-in equipment back to DRMO, members can request in writing authorization to cannibalize an item issued to them by the USAF MARS Office (See attachment 1). The USAF MARS Office will notify the member of the cannibalization decision. Cannibalized equipment may not be bartered or sold. Requests for cannibalization must include (one letter per request is required):
- 18.14. When equipment is being recalled for any reason (membership termination, or member is deceased), the USAF MARS Office will direct the disposal of the equipment. The USAF MARS Office will advise the member (or executor, for a deceased member) in writing of the equipment to be turned in. A copy of this letter will be sent to the SMD. The member (or executor) is responsible for transporting the equipment to the designated drop off point as discussed between the member (or executor) and the SMD. The SMD will issue receipt for property on a DD Form 1150, give the person making the turn-in a copy, and forward a copy to the USAF MARS Office.
- 18.15. If the USAF MARS Office instructs the member to turning the equipment back to DRMO, the member will:
 - 18.15.1. Request a turn-in DD Form 1348-1a from the USAF MARS Office.
 - 18.15.2. Schedule a date and time with DRMO to turn-in the equipment.
 - 18.15.3. Transport the equipment and the DD Form 1348-1a at their expense to the DRMO office.
 - 18.15.4. Provide the USAF MARS Office with a DD Form 1348-1a signed by the DRMO office.
- 18.16. All forms used can be obtained from the USAF MARS Office.

NOTE: All government surplus equipment withdrawn from DRMO is subject to recalled for mission needs higher than USAF MARS

//Signed//

HAROLD R. COLLINS, GS-13, DAF
Chief, USAF MARS

Attachment 1

Sample Cannibalization Letter

From:

Date

To: HQ AFCA/ECFP (MARS)
203W. Losey Street, Rm 3100
Scott AFB, IL 62225

Subject: Cannibalization Request

1. Request cannibalization approval for the following item:

- Nomenclature:
- Stock Number:
- Serial Number:
- Document Number:
- Quantity and Unit of Issue:
- Condition Code:
- Cost of the Item:
- Date Item was Acquired:
- Justification: (must provide: the cause of the problem, why it can not be repaired, the cost to repair it, and the name of the nearest DRMO with distance)

Signature

Print Name

MARS Call Sign (no official calls)

Attachment 2

1. Copy of a completed DD Form 1150 (a blank copy can be obtained from the USAF MARS Office)

REQUEST FOR ISSUE OR TURN-IN		X	ISSUE	SHEET NO.	NO. OF SHEETS	5. REQUEST NUMBER	
			TURN-IN			FX311450013001	
1. FROM: Pete Smith, AFA3ZZ		8. DATE MATERIEL REQUIRED			7. PRIORITY		
2. TO: Joe Doe, AFA3ZY		8. VOUCHER NUMBER			9. POSTED	DATE	BY
					DATE	BY	
3. ACCOUNTING AND FUNDING DATA							
4. END ITEM IDENTIFICATION	a. NAME AND MANUFACTURER	b. MODEL	c. SERIAL NUMBER		d. PUBLICATION		
	Motorola	Quantar	12345643				
ITEM NO.	STOCK NUMBER, DESCRIPTION, AND CODING OF MATERIEL AND/OR SERVICES	CODE	OF ISSUE	QUANTITY	SUPPLY ACTION	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL COST
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
1	5820011234567, Transceiver	1A1	EA	1		10,300.00	0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
							0.00
						SHEET TOTAL	0.00
*ISSUE - I - Initial; R - Replacement						TURN-IN - U - Unserviceable; S - Serviceable	
10. ISSUE OR TURN-IN OF QUANTITIES IN QUANTITY COLUMN IS REQUESTED						GRAND TOTAL	
DATE	BY	11. RECEIVED QUANTITIES IN SUPPLY ACTION COLUMN		DATE	BY		
23 Feb 05	(signature)			23 Feb 05	(Signature)		

DD FORM 1150, OCT 57

REPLACES EDITION OF 1 JUL 56 WHICH MAY BE USED