

Empire Slow Speed Net
Founded 1955 by
KR2RA,
ex-K2DYB (SK)
*** *** *****
Daily
6 PM Eastern time
3566 kHz
7110/1815 alternates

The ESS Bulletin

Pete Gellert W2WSS Memorial Net

April 2025



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<https://www.qsl.net/ess/>
<https://groups.io/g/empire-slow-speed-net>

Net Control Stations

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
W2ITT	WA2YOW	KA2GJV	W2RBA	AB2WB	K1SEI	WI2G

MARCH ROSTER

AA2QL	Fred	Holbrook	11	WA2YOW	C. J.	Staten Island	4
AB2WB	Pat	Ithaca	15	WB2OCA	Jim	Yorktown Heights	5
K2NPN	Phil	Marcy	2	WB2YOR	Tom	Clifton Park	24
KA2GJV	Bruce	Fulton	9	WI2G	Anne	Elma	17
KT2D	Bob	Latham	1	K1SEI	Tage	Killingworth CT	27
N2PEZ	Reiner	Elmira	15	W1BRY	Don	Waterbury CT	2
N2TQT	Colin	Brooklyn	10	K3YAK	David	Mendham NJ	14
N2ZX	Curtis	Mechanicville	3	K3ZYK	Bill	Penn Run PA	7
NK2Y	Jay	Lagrangeville	10	WA3BHM	John	Berlin PA	1
N7RMP	Ralph	Kingston	22	WA3JXW	Dudley	Reading PA	23
W2ITT	Rob	Huntington	22	VE3DCX	Jim	Coe Hill ON	5
W2LC	Scott	Baldwinsville	5	VE3FAS	Phil	Shelburne ON	2
W2RBA	Joe	Mount Vision	30	VE3NUL	Rich	Toronto ON	11
W2XS	John	Northport	20				

March totals: QNI 317, per session 10.2 (Feb 11.5); QSP 52, per session 1.7 (Feb 1.8). A good month, given the propagation-affecting time change. Thanks to W2ITT for filling in for AB2WB, and to N2PEZ for “shadowing” WA2YOW. Due to unpredictable propagation (deep QSB), which can improve during a session, ask “ESS?” before assuming that the usual NCS isn’t around; if they’re running the net, another checkin should advise you to stand by. Congratulations to K1SEI, this year’s first net-certificate recipient. The sole requirement for an ESS certificate on card stock by mail is 80 points in a calendar year; you earn one point each time you check in and a bonus point for running the net (scheduled or fill-in). Even if you never run a session, a couple of checkins a week are all it takes. Our webmaster N2PEZ forwarded an email invitation from N3GE to the Pennsylvania Traffic Net, which meets at 7 pm (the same time as NYS, however, which meets on 3569 kHz) on 3585 kHz. Since the space cadets operate with impunity on the CW portion of 80 meters, it’s good to see CW operations in the so-called digital subband. What’s sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose ... Reiner also forwarded the *NTS Letter* (available to ARRL members), with a nice story by NK2Y. If you’re not a league member either and would like a copy, please let me know by radiogram or email. Good news/bad news —it’s great to hear VE3FAS on the net again, but WNY SM W2LC has had a lot of damage from a recent tornado-like storm; the NWS has precise guidelines for classifying tornadoes, and derechos (similar storms, with straight-line winds instead of rotation) can wreak just as much havoc. Undaunted, Scott has been checking into ESS since then. **Birthdays:** **April**—KT2D 4 and N2TQT 8. **May**—None, to the best of my knowledge. More birthday hijinks last month, alas, when I accidentally omitted AB2WB from the March birthdays; Pat’s is the 17th. My transition to Windows 11 and a new computer has been a bit rocky. Additions and corrections, preferably by radiogram, are always welcome!

Spring Semester

ESS is in the happy position of having a number of new members, due largely to the efforts of the Long Island CW Club (<https://longislandcwclub.org/>, which is open to members from anywhere). Radio Relay International has also apparently lit a fire under the ARRL, which had neglected its traffic-handlers (ironic, given the organization's name) for decades. The league's NTS 2.0 initiative seems to have sparked an increase in traffic and traffic-handlers.

Like most good news, however, all is not unalloyed joy; enthusiasm doesn't automatically impart expertise. Training in CW traffic-handling has lagged, and I'm as guilty as anyone; in my monthly obsession to Fill Up the Page, I've been neglecting the basics. Longtime Western New York section traffic manager KA2GJV (who started on the nets a bit before I did) recently reminded me, gently, that what's second nature to an experienced traffic-handler was *terra incognita* when we started.

I can't speak for Bruce, but when I began checking into traffic nets (ESS and the Big Apple VHF net) I developed a sense of who seemed to know what they were doing and emulated them, in addition to reading whatever I could find on traffic-handling. Although there are fine points you pick up along the way, basic net operations are pretty simple (unless we complicate things with poor habits and net idiosyncrasies we think are universal, but are not).

Net time is finite, and any net (from ESS to the Eastern Area Net) needs to be run as efficiently as possible to clear whatever traffic is listed. To this end, a number of abbreviations, prosigns and prowords are in use which save valuable net time. Most of the ARRL's venerable "pink card" (except for its CW message example) is available to download at <https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/fsd218.pdf>. It's one-stop shopping, just about; the only other operating aid you need to get started is the latest list of ARL numbered radiogram texts, available at <https://nts2.arrl.org/numbered-texts/> in .docx and .pdf file formats. (The older FSD-3 list is missing several newer texts, and it's not unreasonable to expect the ARRL to remove that outdated list from its website in the fullness of time.) Radio Relay International has equivalent operating aids at <https://radiorelay.org/publications/> under "Reference Materials" (upper left)—a traffic operations aid, a list of RRC numbered radiogram texts (the ARRL's new list is identical), and an up-to-date traffic net directory, in addition to radiogram forms and YouTube videos; for our purposes, the video on basic CW net procedures is recommended.

When you're copying traffic, the basic prosign menu is short. If you miss a word, send WA followed by the last word you copied or WB followed by the first word after the missed one. If you miss several words in a row, send BN (the last word you copied) ES (the first word you copied). If you miss the first part of a message (because you didn't know the pen was out of ink), send AB followed by the first word you copied. If you miss the end of a message (sometimes a signature is long), send AA followed by the last word you copied.

Both lists of numbered radiogram texts (ARRL and RRI) require the text numbers to be spelled out in full; figures are much more easily garbled than words, and being sent a number when you're expecting a string of letters violates the principle of least astonishment—give your recipient what they expect!

Net procedures should be standardized; I try to run ESS like I run EAN, but it's human nature for a net manager (especially a less-experienced one) to "personalize" their net with addenda like traffic counts next to callsigns on a net report. It's fine to do this if it makes a particular net manager happy, but it should be recognized as non-standard procedure and not used on other net reports; there's no way to tell if WI2G/1 listed one piece of traffic (irrelevant, since QTC earlier in the report tells the tale) or operated portable from New England.

An efficient, well-run CW traffic net is a thing of beauty. Since nets dovetail and ESS should wrap up before the Second Region and local nets begin at 6:30, and it takes an average of five minutes to send a message on a slow-speed net (three minutes on a regular-speed net like NYS), excessive verbosity eats up valuable time and may require uncleared traffic to be held for another session. Very few of us (including ye manager) check into ESS every day, and it's reasonable to expect basic competence from one's colleagues. It's no crime to make a mistake (we all do), but we should all be willing to learn—and improve!

Happy spring! Very 73 de Anne WI2G