

## EMERGENCY NET OPERATIONS AND PROTOCOL

It is important that we follow a standard protocol when operating emergency nets. During an activation we can expect a large number of transmissions in a relatively short time. For this reason everybody has to be on the same page so that the area net control operators will be able to take messages quickly and efficiently.

When checking into a net for the first time, please identify using your ALERT number first, then your FCC call sign, followed by your tactical call sign. Your tactical call sign will be your location... IE: Cape Coral Hospital, Germain Arena, Health Park, etc. Key the microphone and wait 2 seconds before speaking. This will prevent the first word or two of a transmission from being lost, and save us having to request clarifications. *Net control stations are instructed to ignore any station that does not follow this protocol.*

Initial check-ins at the start of an activation or a SET should be directed to the local Zone Net control station. Zone net control stations can periodically inform the EOC of stations in their area that are available for service. Zone net control stations should just pass the ALERT member number of stations available. This will save time and relieve the burden on the EOC net control station.

Once you have checked into your Zone net and have been recognized by net control your job is to stand by until net control calls you. If you have not already been assigned to a specific location (hospital, shelter, etc.) your net control station may contact you and give you an assignment. If asked to go to a specific location, please proceed there safely. Notify Zone net control when you arrive. *(Note: Your assignment may be in a different ALERT map area, so be sure you contact the appropriate net control station when you arrive and tell him/her that you have arrived at your assigned location. Then stand by for instructions.)*

Once checked in, initiate a call to your Zone net control station only when you have traffic (formal, informal or tactical) otherwise, wait for net control to contact you.

Informal and tactical traffic should be handled between the Zone net control station and the stations in their area. Formal written traffic should be sent directly to the EOC with the approval of the Zone net control station. This will relieve the Zone net control stations of having to recopy and retransmit formal messages. *This procedure should work well if the repeaters are in service. If the repeaters are out of service and it is necessary to use simplex frequencies, then message traffic will have to be handled on a case-by-case basis with the Zone net control station acting as a relay if necessary.*

All ALERT members should make certain the equipment they intend to use during an activation is operational and capable of reaching the required Zone net control stations by repeater AND by simplex. This is especially important this time of year when our likelihood of activation is greatest.

Stations not directly activated as part of the response should monitor their local Zone net control stations from home. These stations can provide valuable support by advising their area net control stations *after the storm* of conditions in their neighborhood. Are roads open? Are phones working? Are your cell phones working? Do you have power? If this information is provided by enough stations over a wide area, it will give the EOC a general overview of conditions in the county.