

## AmRRON FTX 3

### Exercise Plan

*Redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Ephesians 5:16)*

**Objective:** for AmRRON Corps operators to increase proficiency through continued practice.

**Exercise Focus:** JS8Call program and mapping.

**Venue:** Operators are encouraged to participate from whatever location and with whatever equipment/antenna they choose. Operators that need further experience with off-grid power and field-deployable antennas are encouraged to participate from a location other than their normal ham shack (backyard, park, etc.), in other words, truly a *Field Training Exercise*.

**Date:** Saturday, Oct 3, 2020

**ExerciseTime:** 1500-1900 Zulu

Zulu	Eastern	Central	Mtn	Pacific
1500	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	09:00 AM	08:00 AM
1600	12:00 PM	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	09:00 AM
1700	01:00 PM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM	10:00 AM
1800	02:00 PM	01:00 PM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM

**Frequencies:** 7.110 (primary), 10.141.5 (alternate)

**Mode:** JS8Call using "AmRRON FTX" group (@AMRFTX) with a JS8Call offset transmitting between 1900 and 2300 on the waterfall.

**Participant Requirements:**

1. All AmRRON Operators (feel free to share this document with any AmRRON Operator wishing to participate)
2. JS8Call installed and settings adjusted to enable Autoreply, Heartbeat Networking, and Heartbeat Acknowledgements
3. Functional familiarity with JS8Call (Send, Receive, Retrieve and Relay)

**Participant Goals:** Report, retrieve, and map the exercise PIR(s) throughout the Continental United States.

**What is a Priority Intelligence Requirement (PIR)?** PIR(s) identify specific pieces of intelligence needed in order to accomplish a task or mission. A leader may be assigned to do a task in a hostile environment, and in order to progress his planning he may determine he needs one or more pieces of information (PIR). Example: a relief mission to a town isolated by flooding is assigned to a pastor. The pastor determines he needs the following information (PIRs) to progress the mission.

PIR 1: Is there a usable vehicle route to the town?

PIR 2: What are the primary needs of the town?

PIR 3: Who in the town is in charge of the distribution of relief materials?

**Participant Assistance:** Though the exercise simulates a “grid down” scenario, exercise organizers will be available on the Zello Breakout channel (AmRRON Corps members only) to assist exercise participants with questions regarding the exercise and use of the exercise mode. (assistance should not be given to clarify a particular radio transmission (example: “I didn’t get the call-sign of that last TX” or “I didn’t get the last part of that TX”.) These type questions should be solved over the air as if there are not grid-up resources.

**Scenario:** AmRRON members have noticed an increase of reports (albeit unsubstantiated) of food shortages across the country. If these reports are accurate, AmRRON members should be alerted and evaluate their preparations in light of this intelligence. Should the general public become aware/concerned of shortages, a “run” on existing supplies would likely exacerbate the situation, and possibly lead to further social unrest. In order to substantiate reports of shortages, as well as the locations of those shortages, participating AmRRON stations should fill the following Priority Intelligence Requirement (PIR).

### **PIR(s) for this exercise:**

1. Characterize the ready availability of food in your area using the Green/Yellow/Red condition indicators, as follows:
  - a. Green: Normal/all is well (e.g. readily available, with no shortages encountered (walk in and buy it)
  - b. Yellow: Moderate/cautious (e.g. fluctuating availability, and obtainable on occasion (right place/right time)
  - c. Red: High/dangerous (e.g. rarely (if ever) available, with no in-stock date promised by suppliers)
2. Example: Food Avail=YEL

Decode: Food in my location has fluctuating availability, but obtainable if I am at the right place at the right time.

### **JS8Call Settings for Exercise:**

1. Station Info (Rig, Antenna, Location, etc.) field: enter the information requested in the PIR(s). Example: "Food Avail = Grn"
2. Mode Settings:
  - a. JS8Call (Normal....)
  - b. Enable Simultaneous Decoding of all Speeds...
  - c. Enable Autoreply (Auto)
  - d. Enable Heartbeat Networking
  - e. Enable Heartbeat Acknowledgements

### **JS8Call Info and Status Fields**

JS8Call enables the operator to place text in two fields (Info and Status), with the contents of those fields remotely accessible and also transmittable to other stations. This exercise will focus on using the Info field (see below). Many operators use the Status field to store their personal status, known as the Abbreviated STATREP, as described in the SOI document, pages 37-39.

## Participant Responsibilities:

1. Obtain the PIR information for your area and enter the PIR information in the “info” field of JS8Call.
2. Report (TX) your “info” field to the exercise group periodically (perhaps every 15-20 minutes as frequency availability allows.) through the exercise. Take note of your frequency offset in the rather narrow bandwidth of JS8Call, and adjust as necessary to avoid stepping on other operators.

**BEST PRACTICE: when the frequency is busy it is best to patiently “receive” reports instead of trying to “retrieve” reports. Patiently monitor the exercise gathering the intel as it is presented. If near the end of the exercise you feel there are stations you need to gather from, you can then reach out and attempt to “pull” the intel from them directly or via relay. Note: the entire sequence of requesting info via relay takes over 5 minutes for the exchange. At any time during this process an interruption may take place resulting in a failed attempt. Requesting info via relay works and is an important tool, but should be utilized when the frequency is not very busy.)**

3. Record and retrieve as many reports as possible. (See Relay Instructions at the bottom of this document.)
4. Using your preferred off-grid mapping plan, note the location and PIR status of each station you are able to receive. (If you do not have a mapping solution, you can use the Maidenhead U.S. Grid Square Map (available from [http://www.icomamerica.com/en/amateur/amateurtools/2013\\_GridSquareMap.pdf](http://www.icomamerica.com/en/amateur/amateurtools/2013_GridSquareMap.pdf)). Note that the Maidenhead grid system is built into JS8Call.
5. After Action Report (AAR), review your map and notes and report the following information:
  - a. Which area(s) of the United States is/are currently impacted?
  - b. Complete a short After-Action Report (AAR) that summarizes what you have learned, what did/did not work well for you during the exercise, and the personal action items that you need to undertake to increase your preparedness. Send your AAR to: [johnjacob@amrron.com](mailto:johnjacob@amrron.com)
6. After Action Personal Follow-up
  - a. Do I need to take any actions based on my situation, or the situation of those I am working with?
  - b. Are there any shortfalls in my action plan, and if so, how will I remedy these?
  - c. What plans, actions, or supplies do I need to prepare in the event that the observed situation **actually occurs** in the near future?

## Appendix: JS8Call Relays

In order to extend the “reach” of your station, JS8Call allows you to relay through a remote station to send AND retrieve information. **Note well: in order to successfully relay, both the relay station and the destination station must have Autoreply enabled.** Below is the syntax to use.

1. Relay Your station “info” **TO** a Remote station
  - a. Right mouse click on the relay station call sign in the Stations Heard pane of JS8Call, Select “Relay via..”. This will put the callsign in your transmit pane along with the relay command character “>”
  - b. Enter the callsign of the destination station followed by a space.
  - c. Enter the text <MYINFO> and hit the ENTER key. This will populate your station “info” into the transmit pane and trigger your radio to TX the request.
  - d. What happens when all goes well:
    - i. Your station transmits the content of your “info” field to the Relay station
    - ii. The Relay station transmits your “info” to the Destination station
    - iii. The Destination station transmits an acknowledgement to the Relay station << do you mean a response, or an actual ACK? I heard a response, but it was not a formal “ACK” Same question for vi and vii below >>
    - iv. The Relay station transmits the acknowledgement to your station

2. Request the Relay of “info” **FROM** a remote station

**Caution: this sequence can take over 5 minutes for a simple exchange. Use only when the frequency is not busy.**

- a. Right mouse click on the relay station call sign in the Stations Heard pane of JS8Call, Select “Relay via..”. This will put the callsign in your transmit pane along with the relay command character “>”
- b. Enter the callsign of the destination station followed by a space.
- c. Enter the text *info?* and hit the ENTER key. This will trigger your radio to TX the request.
- d. What happens when all goes well:
  - i. Your station transmits the Info Request to the Relay station
  - ii. The Relay station transmits the Info Request to the Destination station
  - iii. The Destination station transmits the Info Response to the Relay station
  - iv. The Relay station transmits the Info Response to your station
  - v. The call sign of the Destination station appears in your Stations Heard screen with a weird symbol to the left. (like 3 prongs on a fork)
  - vi. Your station transmits an Acknowledgement (ACK) to the Relay station
  - vii. The Relay station transmits your ACK to the Destination station.