

AmRRON FTX 4

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, November 7, 2020

Times below have been adjusted to reflect the return to Standard Time on November 1, 2020:

ExerciseTime: 1500-1900 Zulu

Zulu	Eastern	Central	Mtn	Pacific
1500	10:00 AM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM	7:00 AM
1600	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM
1700	12:00 N	11:00 PM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM
1800	1:00 PM	12:00 N	11:00 PM	10:00 AM

Frequencies: **7.120** (primary), **10.141.5** (alternate)

Note that this training exercise will utilize the above frequencies to keep the normal SOI frequency of 7.110 open for persistent net operations.

Mode: JS8Call using the group address @AMRFTX, with a JS8Call offset transmitting between 1900 and 2300 on the waterfall.

Participant Requirements:

1. JS8Call installed and settings adjusted to enable Autoreply, Heartbeat Networking, and Heartbeat Acknowledgements
2. Functional familiarity with JS8Call (Send, Receive, Retrieve and Relay)

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

Participant Assistance: Though the exercise simulates a “grid down” scenario, exercise organizers will be available on the Zello Breakout channel 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: the 2020 Presidential election has been one of the most (if not *the* most) divisive elections in U.S. history. No matter the outcome, it is anticipated that individuals and groups that have instigated civil unrest and riots during this past summer may use the outcome of the election as an excuse to increase their level of anarchy and violence. Unconfirmed reports of post-election Civil Unrest have been circulating. For the situational awareness of all participants, we need to report Civil Conditions in each participant’s area of operation (AO), what actions participants are taking, and if assistance is needed. Operators that identify other members that might be in jeopardy are encouraged to reach out to them with any assistance that can reasonably be provided (based upon their respective proximity).

PIR(s) for this exercise:

1. What are the conditions of the Civil climate in your area of operation (AO)
2. What actions will you be undertaking to assure the safety of you and your family?
3. Do you need assistance?

JS8Call Settings for Exercise:

1. Station Info (Rig, Antenna, Location, etc.) field: enter the information requested in the PIR(s):
 - a. Civil environment, with Grn/Yel/Red condition
 - b. Communicate your personal plans based on the Civil Condition stated
 - c. Communicate any assistance that you need

Example Info field messages with all three PIRs:

Civil = Grn/all normal/needs = none
Civil = Yel/shelter in place/needs = none
Civil = Red/must relocate/need housing

2. JS8Call Mode Settings:
 - a. JS8Call (Normal....)
 - b. Enable Simultaneous Decoding of all Speeds...
 - c. Enable Autoreply (Auto)
 - d. Enable Heartbeat Networking
 - e. Enable Heartbeat Acknowledgements
 - f. Enable Grid Locator Column (View>Show Call Activity Columns>Grid Locator)

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. 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(s) for your area and enter the PIR(s) 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. **(It is important to TX your “info” to the exercise group, as this will cause your report to display in the directed message pane of JS8.)**
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). Note that the Maidenhead grid system is built into JS8Call.
5. If you find a fellow operator that has a need (e.g. must leave their home because of local violence), and you are in a position to provide assistance, communicate your willingness to help out, and then QSY to another frequency (with possible mode change) to coordinate the delivery of your aid.
6. Assistance responses should be sent directly to the operator in need, as a directed message that will be saved in their inbox, with a flag character alert in the receive pane.
7. That response could either request a QSY while maintaining the JS8Call mode (e.g. “I can assist. Pse QSY 7125 JS8Call”); or QSY and also change to another transmission mode (e.g. “I can assist. Pse QSY 7125 MFSK32”).
8. Review your map and notes, and report the following in an After-Action Report (AAR):
 - a. Which area(s) of the United States have you received civil condition reports from? What are the civil conditions in those areas?
 - b. Did you identify any operators in need, and if so, were you able to assist?
 - c. Send your AAR to: johnjacob@amrron.com
9. 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: 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?

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
 - 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.