

AmRRON Digital Net Macro Files 2022

Installation and Use

Introduction:

The files contained in this ZIP file were created to assist the new AmRRON NCS in running oh of the AmRRON HF digital nets. The user should think of the macro file to be similar to a printed net script that an NCS might use when conducting a voice net. The macros allow you to say most of what you might say during a voice net, but with the simple pressing of buttons (macro buttons). The net script will contain many blanks that each NCS will have to fill in before reading the script over the air. Macro tags are used to "fill in the blanks" for the NCS.

Some of the blanks won't change (or, at least not very often). For example, your name, your call sign, or the name of the net you are conducting. Other blanks could change from week to week. For example, the NWOTW, The AmCON Level, the Net Traffic Listing, etc. Some of the blanks will be filled in with information that you've entered into your FLDIGI configuration, such as your name and call sign. Others will be filled in by information that you'll edit and save into the enclosed .txt files.

This document will help you install, configure, and use these files. It contains the macro file itself, as well as several .txt files that you'll need to edit. You should need to edit about three files only once. You'll need to edit two nets prior to the start of each net, as part of your net preparation -- the NWOTW and the Net Traffic List. And finally, you'll use the net checkins .txt file throughout your net, saving changes as the net progresses.

This document assumes that the user is a little familiar with FLDIGI macros (or is at least willing to look up macro tags in the FLDIG documentation), is using a Windows or Linux operating system, and has a basic knowledge of moving, copying, and editing basic files.

Once the user has installed these files and has an understanding of how they work, he or she is free to customize them in whatever manner best suites his or her needs.

The standardized AmRRON macro set can be used for a variety of functions, and include buttons for:

- ✓ NCS
- ✓ ANCS
- ✓ Check-in button

Installation:

First, let's put the file **HF_Practice_Net.mdf** in the macro folder where it belongs. The location will depend on which OS you're using. See the file path in the chart below:

Windows Vista and later versions (7, 8, & 10)	C:\Users\<username>\fldigi.files\macros\
Earlier Versions	C:\Documents and Settings\<username>\fldigi.files\macros\
*Linux	/home/<username>/.fldigi/macros

*If using Linux, and you do not see a .fldigi folder in your home folder, then in your computer's home folder file listing, right click your mouse and select 'Show hidden folders'. That will display the 'dot' files (file names beginning with a . dot).

Second, move the files in the MacroTxt subdirectory where it belongs. Copy/paste the MacroTxt folder from your unzip location, to your fldigi/macros folder. This will keep all your macros and related .txt files in one place for easy management and backing up.

After doing so, the subdirectory ...fldigi/macros should contain:

AmCON_Level.txt
Checkin_Roster.txt
Net_Traffic_List.txt
NWOTW.txt

Configuration:

Let's start by editing the text files. These are used to fill in the blanks in our net script. Any and all characters contained in these text files will be transmitted. This includes spaces and carriage returns.

The easiest way to access the .txt files is by opening up fldigi. In the upper left-hand corner select **File > Folders > Fldigi config...** and open the **macros** folder. You should see your macros and the MacroTxt folder. Open the MacroTxt folder.

Be sure to select '**Save**' after editing, and prior to transmitting. Changes you've made will not transmit until you 'Save' the changes.

First, open up the AmCON_Level.txt, and ensure it contains the current AmCON level. You can obtain it from AmRRON.com.

Second, open up the Checkin_Roster.txt, and delete the sample roster. Add your name to the top, and the ANCS if/when you establish one.

Next, open up the Net_Traffic_List.txt, overwrite the sample traffic list with the traffic you will be sending during your net, including the precedence level.

Finally, update the Net Word of the Week in the NWOTW.txt file.

Next, we will update the macro buttons themselves. The beauty of using macros is that you only have to type what you need to say once.

Open your fldigi program.

In the upper left-hand corner, click on File > Macros > Open.

Select the HF_Practice_Net.mdf

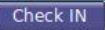
Note the macro buttons on row two



To display subsequent rows of macro buttons, **left** click on the row #

To display the previous row, **right** click on the row #

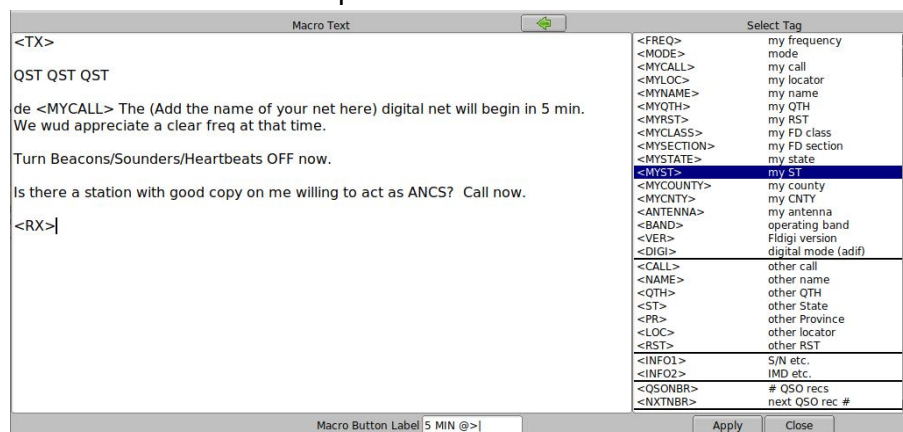


Take the time to go through the macro buttons and become familiar with them, and the function of each. Row One is the standard setup for fldigi, with the exception of the far right button, where we have added a macro for checking in to a net.  You will need to edit the NWOTW.txt file so it will transmit the current NWOTW.

You will need to edit the macro buttons so they reflect your specific net information, and point to the correct .txt files to be transmitted.

To edit the macro buttons, **right click** on the macro button you wish to edit.

A macro editor window will open:



There is some text in the macro that you will need to edit. For example, in the 5 Minute announcement:

QST QST QST AmRRON de <MYCALL> The (Add the name of your net here) digital net will begin in 5 min.
We wud appreciate a clear freq at that time.

QST QST QST AmRRON de <MYCALL> The Mountain Region 80 meter AmRRON digital net will begin in 5 min.
We wud appreciate a clear freq at that time.

You will need to edit the text in the following macros:

5 MIN (net name)

START (net name, and sked info -- day(s), weeks, times, freq, mode, etc.)

SIGNOFF (net name)

You will also need to go through the macros and edit the file path in order to point the macro to the appropriate .txt file for the text contents to be transmitted.

For example, the newly downloaded AmRRON macro set contains SAMPLE filepaths, so you know what .txt file should be there.

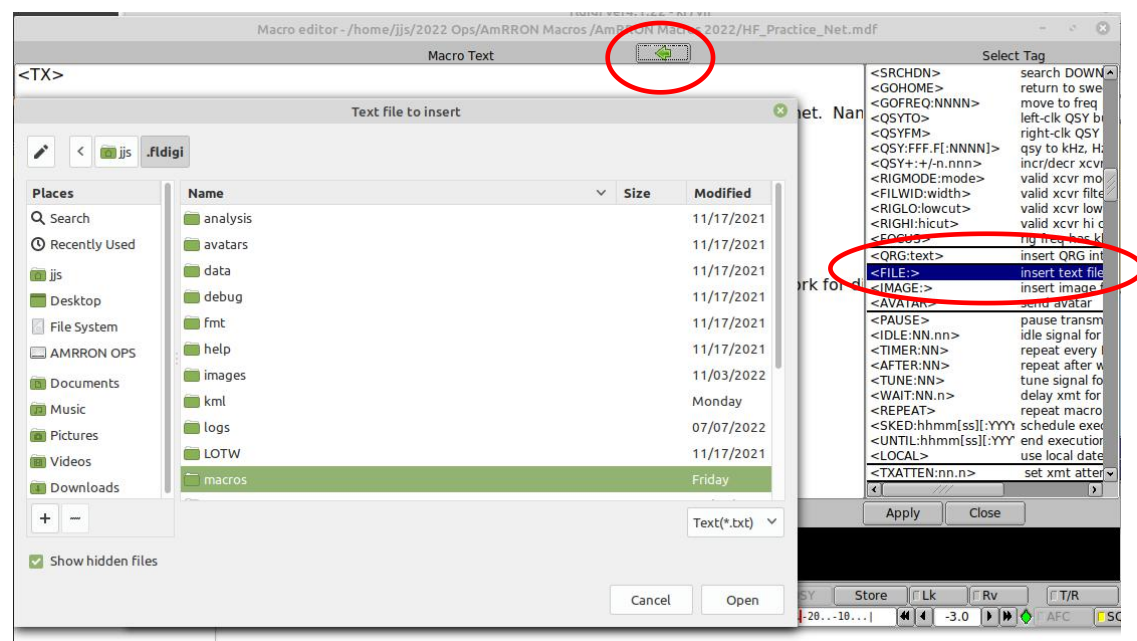
For example:

We are currently at: `<FILE:/.../AmCON Level.txt>`

On my (JJS) computer the line in my macro reads as:

...ntly at: `</home/jjs/.fldigi/macros/macros/MacroTxt/AmCON_Level.txt>`

To do this, highlight and delete the sample filepath in the macro. Leave your cursor there. On the right side there is a list of macro commands. Scroll down about a quarter of the way until you see **<FILE>**. Select it and then click the button (at the top) with the green arrow.



A navigation window will pop up, allowing you to navigate to the .txt file location and select it. It will then become a permanent part of your macro once you click **Apply** and **Save** the macro.

To save your macro in fldigi, go to **File > Macros > Save**

You should rename the macro file to reflect the net you normally run as NCS. For example **80m_PTZ_Practice.mdf**

You can customize the macro and save under as many different names as nets you participate in. If you run four different nets, you would have four macros, each modified to fit that net, with the .mdf file named accordingly.

You will need to edit the file paths in several macro buttons:

Check IN
START
TRFC AFT
Chkins Call
Chkins ACK
FLMSG TFC
SIGNOFF
ANCS NetStart
ANCS Call4Chkns
ANCS Close

Don't forget to hit **Apply** and then **Save** your macro.

You will know if you do not have the file path correct. For example:

You intended to transmit **We are currently at AmCON-4**

But instead, you sent:

We are currently at ERROR: CANNOT OPEN FILE

Using the Macros

Testing:

Prior to running a net with these macros, you'll want to go through them to make sure they work, they point to the appropriate 'File:'.

You can turn your radio (or Signalink) off so you don't actually transmit.

Getting Ready:

Be prepared ahead of time. As soon as you get information related to the net, update the .txt files in your Macros folder (NWOTW, AmCON level, Traffic listing, etc.). Go through the files and folders to ensure everything is current. Save the file and close it. You won't need to edit this until the next net cycle.

Check-Ins:

You'll need to keep your Checkin_Roster.txt file open on your desktop while you run the net. This is the file where you'll log the check-ins as they come in. It's used to send an acknowledgement of check-ins in batch format.

Open up the Checkin_Roster.txt file. Overwrite everything that's in there with your call sign, your state, and "(NCS)." (Note, as an NCS, you count yourself as a net check-in. This is standard practice.) Now, save the file; but, leave it open on your desktop. You'll be updating and saving the file throughout the net as you take check-ins.

If someone says they have traffic to send, you'll note it there. It will remind you to come back to him or her at the appropriate time to send his or her traffic.

Remember to save the file frequently as you go. The macro will only transmit what's actually saved in the file.

FLMSG and FLAMP:

AmRRON nets must pass on any official traffic, such as the most current AIB (AmRRON Intelligence Brief)

Have FLMSG and FLAMP running when you start your net.

If it is a regional or training net, you may like to have something prepared that is relevant to the region (weather warnings/watches/advisories/etc.) or the training topic.

Send FLMSG traffic first, so anyone with FLDIGI may see pertinent information in plain text, even if they don't have FLMSG or FLAMP.

Then send the traffic using FLAMP, compressed, for practice with FEC (Forward Error Correction), and so operators may run a checksum file hash program to authenticate the traffic as official (Checksum hash for AIBs are posted at AmRRON.com).

Running the Net:

Open up FLDIGI. Next, go to File>Macros>Open in the upper left-hand portion of the FLDIGI screen.

Now, select the RollNet.mdf file. You should now be able to see the new macro buttons on your screen.

If you can't see all four rows of them, go to View>View/Hide 48 macros. You should now be able to see all four rows of the macro buttons. I'll go through each button and explain how to use them.

The first row of buttons should be relatively self-explanatory. Right-click on each button to see what each one does. Since I've never run a net that hasn't gone "off script," I use these to help with basic, free-form conversational work.

Second Row:

For the most part, the buttons follow the natural flow of the net, in order, from left to right.

NCS set of macros (all of row 2 and the first half of row 3)

Row 2	
5 MIN ►	OPTIONAL: If you have time to give a 5 minute warning, it announces that the net will begin in 5 minutes and requests a clear frequency.
ANCS RQST ►	(Above the Start macro button) If you do not receive and acknowledgment from your ANCS request in your 5 minute warning, this sends another request for ANCS. If still no response, continue with your net and ignore the ANCS dialogue macro buttons until a station volunteers for the role.
START ►	This begins the net preamble. Also requests emergency or priority traffic.
ANCS Ancmt	If you have a station step up to act as ANCS, this button is a request for him to announce the net is under way, for stations who may not copy you directly.
TRFC AFT ►	This lists the traffic you have for the net (as NCS).
Chkins Call ►	The second part of the preamble. Gives NWOTW and establishes expectations for conduct. Then, it gives an example of the check in format and invites stations to check in.
Chkins ACK ►	This acknowledges all of your check ins, transmitting the contents of your Checkin_Roster.txt file.
Addl Ckins	This button does not automatically transmit, allowing you to copy/paste new checkins to acknowledge them without sending the entire list each time. It will stop transmitting automatically.
FLMSG TFC >	Tells all stations to hold transmissions, and announces message traffic will follow via FLMSG. Switches mode to MFSK32.
FLAMP TFC>	Announces that the net traffic will follow using FLAMP, compressed. For stations to wait until you ask for block fill requests.
Block Fill Rqst	Invites stations missing five or fewer missing blocks to send requests.
Missing ANY	Invites stations missing any number of missing blocks. Good if you have a smaller net and ample time to fill a lot of missing blks.
BK2 Contes	Preparatory announcement that the mode will be changed back to Contestia 4/250.
Row 3	
Contest 4/250	Switches the mode to Contestia 4/250 and reminds operators to adjust squelch if needed.
ANCS Call	Request to ANCS to ask for check ins/relays
Late/Missed Ckn	NCS asking if there are any other late/missed/relay check ins for the net. (alternatively , you could run the Chkins ACK ► macro, which would transmit acknowledgments of all stations checked in)
LST CALL ►	Last Call for check ins before closing the net.
SIGNOFF ►	Announces the end of the net and requests ANCS to announce the close of the net after your final sign off.

ANCS set of macros (second half of row 3)

ANCS Accept	Offering to accept ANCS role in reply to NCS opening request
ANCS NetStart	ANCS announces the start of the net to those who cannot copy NCS, upon NCS's request. Asks stations to stand by.
ANCS Call4chkns	Requests check ins or relays from stations who have no copy on NCS.
Ack Ckins 	ANCS acknowledgment of stations copied which will be relayed to NCS. ANCS should have his Checkin_Roster.txt open.
Rlys 2NCS 	Relays to NCS the list in his Checkin_Roster.txt file.
ANCS Close ▶	Announces the close of the net after NCS has requested the ANCS to do so.

Check In macro (far right end of macro Row 1)

Check IN	This is for checking in to a net in the format requested by NCS. It automatically turns TxID OFF prior to transmitting. The operator will need to be sure to add the Net Word of the Week to the NWOTW.txt file.
-----------------	--

As you take check-ins, type the callsign and state in your Checkin_Roster.txt file and save it. You can also note if they have traffic, or if they've been relayed in. Remember that the macro will transmit only what is saved in that text file. Just because you typed it there doesn't mean that it has been saved.

Once the net is finished, you can print the CK-IN.txt file or save it as something else if you wish to keep a more permanent record.

I hope this macro file and its supporting .txt files are useful.

This document updated and revised from the original macro installation and use guide created by the late, and greatly missed, [Code-Name] Bravo Delta-01.

See you on the air!

