

# Midwest Amateur Radio Service

## Midcars

7258 kHz

# Operations Manual

### PREFACE

The Midwest Amateur Radio Service, Inc., (MIDCARS) was founded on January 23, 1968 by two amateurs, Marv Cook, W9WWE and Nick Geer, K9DDT. The Service operates as a non-profit corporation under a charter from the State of Illinois, issued in 1969 and renewed annually. Since its inception the Service has grown to a membership of hundreds of amateurs in more than twenty States.

The primary aim of Midcars is public service. Through a skilled and disciplined organization, our purpose is to provide dependable emergency communications on a day-to-day basis. By providing a monitored frequency, on which mobiles are given priority, accidents or other emergency situations may be quickly reported and receive prompt attention. The frequency on which Midcars operates also provides a place where stations may meet and move off or receive assistance or information.

Routine traffic of a non-emergency nature is not handled on frequency except, at the discretion of Service Control, a brief message may be passed when it is impractical for the stations involved to move off frequency.

## FREQUENCIES

Midcars lays no claim to any specific frequency. However, as determined by the Board of Directors, the Service Control station will maintain Service operation as close to 7258 kHz, or any other designated frequency, as is practical.

### CHECK-IN PROCEDURE

It is not required that a station be a member of Midcars in order to participate, although it is hoped that our goals will be shared to the extent that a voting membership will be desired by all.

Stations responding to a call by Service Control should give only **their** call sign, ONCE ONLY and wait to be acknowledged. The words "Check-in", "Break", and "Recheck" should NOT be used. If you wish to report an emergency, the word "Emergency", followed by your call sign, will receive instant priority. If mobile, so state on the initial call-in. When Service Control has completed a list of check-ins on a given stand-by, each station will be acknowledged individually, in turn, except that mobiles will be acknowledged first.

When acknowledged, use the following procedure: Give the call sign of the Service Control station, then your call sign, your name and location. If you are QRU, state that you have one-way or two-way facilities into your area. If you are looking for a particular station or location, make a brief call for it on your **first** transmission. Do not ask Service Control's permission to call your station or area. You may assume his permission to do so. If you get no reply, say "Please list" or "Do not list", as you wish. If you wish to contact a station you **know** to be on frequency, say "Contact", followed by your call sign, and wait to be acknowledged. Use the word "Contact" for this purpose only.

**IMPORTANT:** Upon completion of your transmission, if you are signing clear or even if you are QRU and intend to continue to monitor the frequency, you **must**, according to FCC regulations, give the call sign of the Service Control station, followed by your call sign. Alternatively, it is legal to say "Midcars" (the official net designator) then your call sign. If you list traffic, always check out when leaving the frequency so that Service Control may remove your traffic from his list. When moving off to another frequency to establish contact, help Midcars to maintain its reputation for courtesy by always inquiring if the frequency is in use.

### SERVICE CONTROL STATION

The Service Control station is the focal point of our entire operation. Although not a requirement, it is highly desirable that he be a member of Midcars. In any case, he should be aware of the purposes of our organization and be fully acquainted with the contents of this Manual. The major contribution to the success of our efforts clearly rests with these individuals.



Service Control should have a strong, clean signal and his manner should command the respect of participating stations. He should be firm and brief but friendly, remembering that he is merely coordinating the efforts of a skilled and dedicated group of amateurs. Many check-ins are not familiar with our procedures. Toward these stations he should show tolerance and understanding and not become irritated if procedures are not followed to the letter. If Service Control makes his transmissions short, participating stations are likely to be equally brief. When the check-in load is heavy, experience has shown that slowing down the pace of operations achieves greater efficiency than trying to operate at breakneck speed.

Service Control should frequently announce that he is standing by for mobiles only, since mobile operation is the primary function of Midcars. After logging all the mobiles on a given stand-by, he should NOT announce that he is standing by for fixed stations only, thus excluding the mobiles. Instead, he should merely say, "This is Midcars", followed by his call, or ". . . . (his call) for Midcars", thus opening the Service for any check-ins, including mobiles.

After each stand-by for check-ins, Service Control should quickly announce the calls he has logged, before going back to the top of the list. Otherwise, those calling will not know whether or not they have been heard. He should, as time permits, call the mobiles who have already checked in and give them an opportunity to make a transmission. Service Control should use restraint in the frequency with which he gives his own name and QTH. This information is unnecessary unless requested and wastes valuable time.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

Consistent involvement and careful attention to detail is the only sure way to acquire the expertise necessary to be ready to handle emergency situations. When an emergency arises, Service Control must exercise good judgment as to what steps to take, in what order. In general, it is usually wise to suspend normal operation until all pertinent facts have been ascertained, and for as long thereafter as deemed necessary.

In the case of an emergency involving a vehicle, Service Control should ask the nature of the emergency, the exact location (highway number, nearest exit if an Interstate, direction of travel, etc.) and what type of assistance — police, ambulance, fire equipment, tow truck — is needed. Control should then call for a station in the vicinity of the emergency, remembering that all State Police posts in any one State are in touch with each other, so a phone call to one will obtain the aid of any other. If no amateur station is quickly available in the State where the emergency exists, Service Control should ask a station in another location to make a phone call to relay the information. Reimbursement for such authorized calls, where a toll charge is involved, will be made, upon application, by Midcars. It should be noted here that State Police are very reluctant to contact posts other than their own in cases of minor emergency.

## ADDITIONAL OPERATING SUGGESTIONS

No station should assume Service Control until station equipment is sufficiently warmed up to assure minimum drift. When in doubt as to frequency, a check with a station known to have precise frequency calibration is advisable. It is a good idea to operate "split" if possible, so that stations calling in off frequency can be tuned in without changing the Control transmit frequency.

If QRM appears on or near the frequency, it should be completely ignored. If the QRM is intentional, this is the best way to frustrate the intruder. If it is unintentional, continuing operation in the normal manner will get the message across. At no time should anyone be asked to move. If intentional QRM makes normal operation temporarily impractical, Service Control may elect to rag-chew with readable stations on frequency until the QRM subsides.

When band condition makes operation difficult, one or more alternate Service Control stations should be asked to put out calls from their areas to obtain better coverage. At such times, the original Service Control station is responsible for proper operation of the Service.

Should procedural questions arise, they should be discussed off frequency or by letter to a Midcars officer or coordinator.

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This manual has been prepared to help Midcars to better serve the public and our fellow amateurs. It does not cover all possible contingencies that may arise in Midcars operation and is not intended to do so. But if it helps smooth the way for our newer Service Controllers and helps make participation in Midcars a more rewarding experience, it will have served its purpose.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to EASTCARS for ideas gleaned from its excellently-written Operations Manual, and to the members of the MIDCARS Board of Directors for their helpful suggestions.

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