WESTERN AREA NET/*Evening Cycle*

O P E R A T I N G   G U I D E

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Net Manager

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I.
INTRODUCTION

The *Western Area Net / Evening Cycle* ("*WAN*") functions as an independent net affiliated with *Radio Relay International* (RRI)*.* Western Area includes the three evening region nets: Sixth (CA, NV & Pac); Seventh (AB, AK, BC ID, MT, OR & WA); and Twelfth (AZ, CO, NM, UT & WY). *WAN* meets each evening at 0430 UTC (0330 UTC during DST periods) on designated frequencies. See below. Net session effectiveness is critical given the distances involved, traffic being relayed, and liaison schedule constraints.

This *Operating Guide* has been developed to help assure *WAN* session effectiveness. It provides all net participants with a summary restatement of concepts, principles and practices relating generally to area net operations; policies and procedures specific to *WAN*; disaster operation guidance; and related station and net control operating tools.

Exhibiting good operating form on *WAN* not only helps the NCS run an efficient session, it builds *esprit-de-corps* among net participants, and serves as an example to those who follow as traffic-handlers and net officials.

WAN is managed by Robert Griffin, K6YR. Questions about the net or inquiries into participation in *WAN* sessions may be forwarded to K6YR by radiogram, e-mail or telephone.

This *Operating Guide* is updated periodically and, upon approval by the active net operators, republished. Your suggestions and comments to improve it are welcome.

Best regards,

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II.
RRI – AN OVERVIEW

WAN/Evening is an independent net affiliated with RRI through written *Terms of Reference* for the Western Area Staff. Net operations seek to cooperate with NTS facilities and other public service communication organizations.

The RRI governance, management structure and facilities are under development and will be integrated into an international plan to achieve two principle objectives: rapid movement of traffic from origin to destination, and training amateur radio operators to handle formal written traffic and participate in structured networks across all effective modes.

RRI affiliated networks and related facilities operate on a scheduled, continuous basis.

RRI serves to complement and support other organized traffic circuits. Other circuits function as valuable alternatives in the best interest of efficient message relay and delivery.

RRI Nets and liaison facilities may find it necessary to take temporary expedients to move traffic effectively. At the area net level, such actions should only be considered after discussions by the net manager with the region net and digital managers.

RRI principles, policies, practices and operational features are published in the *Traffic Operations Manual* FM-001. Updates to this Guide will summarize significant aspects contained in RRI publications as it relates to the operations of the Area-level net.

WAN participants should be generally familiar with RRI practices, and specifically with this *Operating Guide*.

III.
PRINCIPLES OF OPERATIONS & GOVERANCE

A.   General. *WAN* operators will be expected by the NCS to be "savvy" about net policies and procedures. New participants will be offered this *Operating Guide* by the Net Manager to assist them to develop net session skills. An area net is not a training ground for new traffic operators; it is a perfect place to hone and develop sound operating and traffic-handling skills and judgment. And it is a lot of fun!

B.   Traffic Routing. *WAN* will adhere closely to established routing protocol and net structures, unless conditions require temporary alternative circuits to move traffic listed. See below, Section VI and Reference "A" -- the *Traffic Routing Guide*.

C.   Routing Deviations. Frequent departure from normal traffic routings will, if carried to an extreme, cause "strangulation" of one or more nets left out of the traffic circuit. In the interest of efficiency, sound organization, system credibility, training and morale of operators, use the RRI structure as it is intended to be used.

D.   Alternate Routes. Deviations required to be instituted on a more extended basis should be left to the discretion of the Net Manager in consultation with the region net managers and affiliated networks.

Operators on the higher level nets, who handle traffic destined for their locale should deliver the messages, not route them through the system.

E.   Special Liaison Methods. The Net Manager, in consultation with region net managers involved, may arrange special liaison methods to facilitate traffic routing when operator resources need to be considered.

F.   Participant Recognition. Recognition is an important aspect of organizations that rely on volunteers. *WAN* takes dedicated, skillful operators to make it run smoothly. The Net Manager will stress appropriate recognition, including net certificates and endorsements, and RRI special awards.

G.   Net Manager Functions. The Net Manager (NM), elected by the active net operators to a two-year term (no term limits), assigns Net Control Stations, works closely with region net and inter-area traffic managers, represents the views of the area net, and provides net operational guidance.

H.   Net Activity Records & Reporting. Net session reports, activity records and summary external reports are maintained and submitted monthly with forms prescribed by RRI by or under the supervision of the NM. See Reference "B".

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IV.
POLICIES

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A.   <u>Net Sequence and Schedule</u>. *WAN* holds a daily session at 0430 UTC (0330 UTC during DST periods). All routine Net sessions conform to the time sequence constraints to which region liaison stations and inter-area network functions are subject.

B.   <u>Net Frequencies</u>. The designated *WAN* frequencies are on or about 3552 KHz and on or about 7052 KHz, the alternate. During Summer months, band conditions typically require the Net Manager to designate 7052 KHz as the primary net frequency, with 3552 KHz as alternate. Net Control Stations (NCS) have the discretion to relocate a net session to meet circumstances. 7108 KHz is a designated secondary frequency.

C.   <u>Net Session Sequence</u>. The sole purpose of a *WAN* session is to clear traffic listed in an expeditious manner, consistent with band conditions, resources available, and RRI/*WAN* policies and procedures. Following net call-up, the NCS shall request liaison representatives to report in as called to list traffic or clear listed traffic. Designated region net liaison stations should be alert to the NCS calls and directions (including 'QN' signals); otherwise the efficiency of the session may be degraded. Liaison stations without traffic or a session function (including as relay) shall not be held and should be allowed to leave the net as soon as possible. The net session shall be closed promptly after all listed traffic is cleared.

Section VI covers routine net session procedures. Reference "C" lists 'QN' signals that relate to traffic net operations.

D.   <u>Net Check-In Policy</u>. Participation in *WAN* sessions is normally restricted to designated region net representatives and assigned IATN (Inter-Area Traffic Network) functions, all led by an assigned NCS. Others who report in with traffic will be cleared at the discretion of the NCS provided they can follow net procedure and session speed. Visitors without traffic will be promptly excused, unless they can provide outlets unavailable through normal NTS channels.

E.   <u>Limited Load Capacity</u>. "Overflow" traffic must be held over or routed through alternative circuits. This policy permits assigned IATN (Inter-Area Traffic Network) and region net liaison stations or others acting as back-up representatives to meet prescribed schedules. NCS should not hold a liaison station for traffic that will force the station or stations to miss their assignment.

F.   <u>Net Control Stations</u>. Each *WAN* session is directed by a NCS assigned to a Session Schedule by the Net Manager. The schedule is distributed periodically to active net participants, and may include Alternate Net Control Stations (ANCS) to serve as a backup to the NCS. See Section VI (F) below for detailed duties.

V.
OPERATIONS DURING DISASTERS

A.   General Operation Considerations. RRI is dedicated to health and welfare communications during disasters, as well as the daily handling of third-party formal written traffic. When an emergency circumstance arises, RRI will expand its routine operations to fit the situation as it evolves.

B.   Net Manager Functions. During and after a disaster, the primary functions of the Area Net Manager are:

1. Maintain a high sensitivity to disasters in the Area and in regions adjoining the Area. Notify affected region net managers.

2. In the event high precedence cross-area traffic is involved, contact the region net managers and inter-area directors to assist in making arrangements to clear the traffic.

3. Contact other area net managers to confer on the need for additional net sessions or direct "hot line" representation.

4. Maintain close contact with all region net managers in the Area and make decisions about overall operations in consultation with them.

C.   Self-Alerting Operators. *WAN* operators should be self-alerting to emergency conditions that might require their services. At the area net level, the immediate need will be for Net Control Stations to lead any special sessions or to monitor the Area Net frequencies for coordination with the Net Manager. Special assignments may be required since some operators may have other responsibilities.

Operators with highly specialized skills or equipment may be sought for "hot line" assignments by or through the Area Net Manager. Flexibility and assignment certainty are keys to effective communications support during emergency operations.

D.   Health and Welfare Traffic. Welfare inquiries into a disaster area should be originated through served agencies and should be held until stabilization of disaster area communications has taken place. Such traffic from a disaster area should be handled in order of its precedence.

VI.
ROUTINE SESSION PROCEDURES

A.   Net Session Sequence. The NCS promptly opens *WAN* with a concise call-up, including appropriate *QN* signals. Then follows a listing of traffic and liaison representatives/inter-area functions in order sought by the NCS. Depending on who has what traffic and precedence, the NCS will continue to check-in, pair off, or excuse stations. The Net frequency will be kept clear during a session to expedite NCS instructions. In some circumstances the NCS will also have a liaison or inter-area function assignment requiring use of the Net frequency for short periods to relay traffic. When all traffic has been cleared or successfully assigned for relay, the session is ended by NCS with a concise closing transmission.

B.   Checking-In and Sorting/Listing Traffic to NCS. Assigned liaison and IATN (Inter-Area Traffic Network) function stations report in at the call of the NCS. Prior to the Net session, traffic held should be carefully sorted by routing nomenclature appropriate to *WAN*. List the route *first*, followed by the number (**not spelled out**) held for that route. *WAN* routings are:

>   *RN6 (Sixth Region Net)*   *CENTRAL (for Central Area)*
>   *RN7 (Seventh Region Net)*   *EASTERN (for Eastern Area)*
>   *TWN (Twelfth Region Net)*

For example: "QTC RN6 2 RN7 1 TWN 4   EAST 1"

C.   Clearing Traffic from Eastern/Central and to Central. It is customary and a matter of courtesy for the NCS to clear the inter-area function stations coming from Eastern Area (Station H) and Central Area (Station G), and to Central Area (Station I) as soon as practicable. In the case of Stations H and G, they have already devoted considerable time that evening to their function assignment by the time they report in to the Net. The Station I counterpart (Station F) checks into *WAN* or awaits its closing from the Central Area, where it is hours later than on the West Coast. All session participants without traffic should be promptly excused unless, at the request of NCS, that station can assist in clearing traffic.

D.   Clearing Traffic on Net Frequency. The Net frequency should be used sparingly to handle traffic. Otherwise the efficiency of the session drops and stations back-up awaiting further pairing and checkout instructions.

E.   Following NCS Directions. Net participants should clearly understand, and then acknowledge NCS directions. If the directions are not for any reason understood, then ask them to be repeated or clarified. Directions that cannot be carried out should be brought back to the attention of NCS. Do not alter an NCS assigned pairing frequency. Return to Net frequency, advise NCS and obtain further directions based upon the circumstances.

F. <u>Net Control Stations</u>. *WAN* Net Control Stations (NCS) have considerable responsibility for leading assigned sessions. It can be stressful and often calls for creativity, patience and fortitude. The NCS should:

- Possess a 20-25 wpm code operating skill.

- Have a signal strength that can command the Net frequency.

- Know and use appropriate *QN* signals.

- Strive for concise, but complete directions, consistently transmitted (brief informalities and humor are rarely inappropriate).

- Check and clear the designated Net frequency before opening a Net session.

- Monitor WWV/H frequencies to judge likely band conditions during the session.

- Adopt and use a complete Net session log sheet to closely track session activity. See Reference "D" for a model Net Session Log Sheet.

- Be familiar with the current region net frequencies and session meeting schedules. Be prepared to assist Station I and F with their schedule for handling Central Area traffic.

- Keep the Net frequency clear during the session with periodic calls, such as:

    "WAN de (NCS call sign) K" "WAN de (NCS call sign) QTC? K"

If an assigned NCS is unable to direct a Net session, the Net Manager or the assigned ANCS should be advised. If the ANCS stands in for the assigned NCS, the Net Manager should be notified with a net session report.

The results of each Net session should be promptly reported to the Net Manager using a radiogram. See Reference "E" for a sample NCS Session Report Message.

G.   "Back Channel" Contacts. Coordination among *WAN* participants often involves having a "back channel" for administrative matters that do not lend themselves to handling on-the-air. Such things as information reports, obtaining substitutes for assignments, and arranging special schedules require other means of contact, including email and texting.

REFERENCES

"A" *Traffic Routing Guide*

"B" Traffic-Related *"QN Signals"*

"C" Activity Records & Reports Forms

"D" Net Session Model Log Sheet

"E" Sample Net Session Report Message

REFERENCE "A"

Traffic Routing Guide

State/Province	Abbrev	Region	Area
Alaska	AK	7	WESTERN
Alabama	AL	5	CENTRAL
Alberta	AB	7	WESTERN
Arizona	AZ	12	WESTERN
Arkansas	AR	5	CENTRAL
British Columbia	BC	7	WESTERN
California	CA	6	WESTERN
Colorado	CO	12	WESTERN
Connecticut	CT	1	EASTERN
Delaware	DE	3	EASTERN
District of Columbia	DC	4	EASTERN
Florida	FL	4	EASTERN
Georgia	GA	4	EASTERN
Guam	GU	6	WESTERN
Hawaii	HI	6	WESTERN
Idaho	ID	7	WESTERN
Illinois	IL	9	CENTRAL
Indiana	IN	9	CENTRAL
Iowa	IA	10	CENTRAL
Kansas	KS	10	CENTRAL
Kentucky	KY	9	CENTRAL
Labrador	LB	11	EASTERN
Louisiana	LA	5	CENTRAL
Maine	ME	1	EASTERN
Manitoba	MB	10	CENTRAL
Maryland	MD	3	EASTERN
Massachusetts	MA	1	EASTERN
Michigan	MI	8	EASTERN
Minnesota	MN	10	CENTRAL
Mississippi	MS	5	CENTRAL
Missouri	MO	10	CENTRAL
Montana	MT	7	WESTERN
Nebraska	NE	10	CENTRAL
Nevada	NV	6	WESTERN
New Brunswick	NB	11	EASTERN
New Hampshire	NH	1	EASTERN
New Jersey	NJ	2	EASTERN
New Mexico	NM	12	WESTERN
New York	NY	2	EASTERN
Newfoundland	NF	11	EASTERN
North Carolina	NC	4	EASTERN
North Dakota	ND	10	EASTERN
Nova Scotia	NS	11	EASTERN
Ohio	OH	8	EASTERN
Oklahoma	OK	5	CENTRAL
Ontario	ON	11	EASTERN
Oregon	OR	7	WESTERN
Pennsylvania	PA	3	EASTERN

REFERENCE "A"

Traffic Routing Guide (continued)

State/Province	Abbrev	Region	Area
Prince Edward Island	PE	11	EASTERN
Puerto Rico	PR	4	EASTERN
Quebec	PQ	11	EASTERN
Rhode Island	RI	1	EASTERN
Saskatchewan	SK	10	CENTRAL
South Carolina	SC	4	EASTERN
South Dakota	SD	10	CENTRAL
Tennessee	TN	5	CENTRAL
Texas	TX	5	CENTRAL
Utah	UT	12	WESTERN
Vermont	VT	1	EASTERN
Virginia	VA	4	EASTERN
Virgin Islands	VI	4	EASTERN
Washington	WA	7	WESTERN
West Virginia	WV	8	EASTERN
Wisconsin	WI	9	CENTRAL
Wyoming	WY	12	WESTERN
APO/FPO AE		2	EASTERN
APO/FPO AA		4	EASTERN
APO/FPO AP		6	WESTERN

REFERENCE "B"

WESTERN AREA NET (Evening Cycle)
Monthly Net Session Summary

Yr/Month/Day (UTC)	NCS	Total Traffic	Time in Session	Notes

Summary:

[1] Total Sessions Reported: _____   **[2]** Total Traffic: _____

[3] Total Session Time: _____ Minutes   **[4]** Average Messages per Session: _____

(2÷1)

[5] Rate: _____ % (2÷3)

_____

Representation* Rates: IATN-W _____ **%** Region Nets _____ %

*IATN-W = STNS G, H, I, & J   Region Nets = RN6, RN7 & TWN

Comments:

RADIO RELAY INTERNATIONAL
Western Area Net / Evening Cycle
MONTHLY SUMMARY REPORT

Month/Year:

1. Sessions Reported:

2. Total Traffic Handled:

3. Total Session Time:

4. Average Messages/Session [2÷1]**:**

5. Rate [2÷3]**:**

Region Nets Representation (%):

IATN Functions Representation (%):

_____

Net Manager: Robert Griffin, K6YR

Date Submitted:

REFERENCE "C"

QN Signals for CW Net Use

QNA*   Answer in prearranged order.
QNB*   Act as relay Between_____and_____.
QNC   All net stations Copy.
      I have a message for all net stations.
QND*   Net is Directed (controlled by net control station).
QNE*   Entire net stand by.
QNF   Net is Free (not controlled).
QNG   Take over as net control station.
QNH   Your net frequency is High.
QNI   Net stations report In
      I am reporting into the net. (Follow with a list of traffic or QRU.
QNJ   Can you copy me?
QNK*   Transmit messages for_____to_____.
QNL   Your net frequency is Low.
QNM*   You are QRMing the net. Stand by.
QNN   Net control station is_____.
      What station has net control?
QNO   Station is leaving the net.
QNP   Unable to copy you.
      Unable to copy_____.
QNQ*   Move frequency to_____and wait for_____to finish handling traffic.
      Then send him traffic for_____.
QNR*   Answer_____and Receive traffic.
QNS   Following Stations are in the net.* (Follow with list.)
      Request list of stations in net.
QNT   I request permission to leave the net for_____minutes.
QNU*   The net has traffic for you. Stand by.
QNV*   Establish contact with_____on this frequency. If successful, move to and send
      him   traffic for_____.
QNW   How do I route messages for_____?
QNY*   Shift to another frequency (or to_____kHz) to clear traffic with_____.
QNZ   Zero beat your signal with mine.

* For use only by the Net Control Station

Notes on Use of QN Signals

QN Signals are special signals for use in amateur CW nets only. They are not for use in casual amateur conversations. Other meanings that may be used in other services do not apply. Do not use QN signals on phone nets. Say it with words. QN signals need not be followed by a question mark, even though the meaning may be interrogatory.

REFERENCE "D"

WESTERN AREA NET CONTROL STATION LOG

CYCLE_____   DATE_____UTC   TFC TOTAL _____

CALL SIGN _____   TIME OPEN _____   TOTAL TIME_____MIN

DAY _____   TIME CLOSED _____   NCS RPT NO. _____

DOWN __ __ __	FREQUENCY: STATION	UP __ __ __	REP Fm/To	TRAFFIC LISTED					
				EAST	CENTRAL	RN6	RN7	TWN	OTHER
			STN G						
			STN H						
			RN6/R						
			RN7/R						
			TWN/R						
			STN I						
			STN J						
			RN6/T						
			RN7/T						
			TWN/T						
			RN6/3						
			RN7/3						
			TWN/3						
			STN F						

REFERENCE "E"

WAN / Evening Cycle
Net Control Station -- Sample Session Report Message

WAN Net Control Stations use the following message format to file Net Session Reports with the Net Manager, or the designated Net Recorder:

Preamble

NR *xx* R W7GB 35   MOSES LAKE WA   APR 1

Address

[Net Manager or Net Recorder call sign]

BT

Text

WAN APR 1Z W7GB NCS
W7XT G W7IZ H K6YR
 I AD0A J K6HTN 6T
N6AWH 6R W7ZIW 7T W7EKB
7R NA7G TT W7DML TR
X 16 IN 15 ON

3652 CNDX GOOD x 73
BT
Signature

DON