



## THE 3905 CENTURY CLUB NET CONTROLLERS' STUDY GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

Since February 1977, **The 3905 Century Club** has provided the premier Worked All States and Awards nets on the amateur bands. Our nets are an opportunity to make contacts for use toward Club awards or toward any other purpose, as well as an opportunity for improvement of both personal and equipment operating skills. Our club's awards have significant value in the amateur radio world, as do the skills developed while operating our nets.

The idea of making contacts and exchanging QSL cards in the pursuit of a wide variety of award certificates has become enormously popular and our Club has become the leader in this area of the hobby. To insure that those amateurs who pursue this facet of the hobby are well served, it is imperative that the Club's nets operate efficiently and in consistent compliance with our rules so that the reputation of the Club for efficiency, fairness and progressive innovation is maintained.

Since the nets are what the amateur radio community will judge us by, it follows that our Net Control Stations are at the forefront and are key to achieving that goal. For this reason, this Net Controllers' Study Guide has been prepared to assist prospective Net Controllers in preparing for the job of operating the nets and maintaining uniform club standards.

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study guide, when used in conjunction with our ***Procedures for Net Control Stations*** (Net Control Guide) is to provide each candidate for Net Controller with a working knowledge of the Club's prescribed operating procedures and the policies under which the Club's nets are to be conducted.

### DESCRIPTION

This study guide is in the form of an open book exam and is to be used in conjunction with the official ***Procedures for Net Control Stations***. These procedures may be downloaded from the Club website. The URL for the website is <https://www.3905ccn.org>

Once a prospective Net Control Operator has thoroughly studied the ***Procedures for Net Control Stations*** as well as the content of this ***Net Controller's Study Guide***, and is able to answer all the questions at the end of this Guide, the NCS candidate should contact our **NCS Training Officer** for instructions on taking the written test. After doing so, the candidate will be given a trial run as a Net Controller which will be critiqued privately by the Training Officer before final NCS certification. Contact information for our NCS Training Officer may be found in the Club Officers Listing on our website.

## **NATURE OF THE JOB**

Before tackling the questions, the NCS candidate should have a realistic expectation as to the character of the job.

NCS operators must be aware of the use and limitations of their equipment. They must have a good understanding of antenna use, an ability to adjust the filters on their receiver, know how to work split on their equipment, and maintain their stations and associated equipment in good working order. Beyond that, Net Controlling is an art. It is technique – the ability to operate well – that makes a successful Net Controller.

An NCS must be understood clearly, since the entire net is dependent upon their directions. In addition to maintaining the proper distance from the microphone, they should practice good enunciation of words and use standard phonetics.

The proper selection of relay stations by noting who and where are the strongest stations will enable the NCS to facilitate a relay or complete contacts more rapidly, even under very adverse conditions.

This is important, since the Net Controller's job is to facilitate as many contacts as possible during the period of the net. Unless the net is moved along at its best pace under given conditions, an NCS will lose those who refuse to wait for hours to make one contact. The pace that an NCS sets and the efficiency with which they run their nets will most often determine their reputation as a Net Controller.

Net Controllers must always operate in the best interests of the net. Should they place their own interests before those of the net, for example, by taking more calls than they are entitled to under the rules, they will generate grumbling among the net participants – guaranteed.

Net Controllers must always treat every station fairly. When moving down the list they should always call a station at least twice before passing him/her up. Never adopt the attitude that, "if I can't hear him that's his tough luck." Proper use of relays can usually solve the problem.

Net Controllers represents the Club. Casual listeners to the net draw their opinions of the Club from the Net Control Station. On occasion an NCS must bite their tongues. This is particularly important when they receive inappropriate requests, or numerous and out of order calls for "contact." Such situations must be handled with a certain amount of grace. This is not to say that an NCS should ever give up any of their authority over the net, or that they can't be insistent about what they are trying to do. Good judgment based on the foregoing, however, is essential to the good order of the nets.

By becoming familiar with the ***Procedures for Net Control Stations***, much of the foregoing will become second nature.

After becoming familiar with the contents of the ***Procedures for Net Control Stations*** document, please begin the question and answer section below. Should you have any questions, or problems, you may contact the NCS Training Officer by e-mail. The NCS Training Officer's email address may be found in the Club Officer Listing on our Club website at <https://www.3905ccn.org>.

# THE 3905 CENTURY CLUB NET CONTROLLERS' STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

After becoming familiar with the separate *Procedures for Net Control Stations* document, please answer the following questions for yourself. When you are done, check each of your answers against the guidelines outlined in *The Procedures for Net Control Stations*, and carefully reread any sections where it appears that you have selected the wrong answer.

When you are satisfied that you understand all the material and can answer all the questions accurately, please contact our NCS Training Officer for information on how to take the official Net Controller's Test, which will be taken on -line. **DO NOT send in a copy of the test below either by email or postal mail. The official test will be taken on-line.**

## NET PREPARATION

1. Net Control station is told to monitor the intended frequency prior to net time for which of the following reason:
  - (A) to move other hams off the frequency.
  - (B) to check for potential new members.
  - (C) to ensure a clear frequency before starting the net.
  - (D) to conduct a social time before the net.
2. If non-net stations are operating on the published net frequency, the net frequency should be moved:
  - (A) anywhere within the appropriate portion of the band on which the net operates.
  - (B) to an alternate frequency, if published.
  - (C) a Maximum of 3 KHz from the published main frequency.
  - (D) either B or C.
3. The 40-meter frequency of 7.198 MHz is reserved for the Century Club at 0400Z each day.
  - (A) true
  - (B) false
4. An NCS should take a pre-list of check-in stations prior to net time. The pre-list serves:
  - (A) to give NCS an estimate of band conditions.
  - (B) to allow NCS to plan for relay stations he might use during the net.
  - (C) to shorten check-in time and hold the frequency until net time.
5. According to FCC rules, NCS must identify every:
  - (A) 5 minutes.
  - (B) 20 minutes.
  - (C) 10 minutes.
  - (D) 7 Minutes.

6. Reading of the preamble at the start of the net is mandatory:
  - (A) true
  - (B) false
7. In planning for the use of relay stations, the main consideration is:
  - (A) geographic location
  - (B) strength of signal.
  - (C) a trusted seasoned station familiar with net procedures.
  - (D) all of the above.
8. During an emergency, net operation:
  - (A) will cease immediately on request.
  - (B) will be turned over to competent authority if necessary.
  - (C) will be suspended for the duration of the emergency.
  - (D) all of the above.
9. Information concerning sources of information about the club will be given out:
  - (A) 3 times per net.
  - (B) at least 2 times per net.
  - (C) at the end of each round.
  - (D) all of the above.
10. The Club profile in NetLogger should be updated:
  - (A) Once a month.
  - (B) Once a week.
  - (C) never.
  - (D) Before the start of each net.

## **NET OPERATION**

11. A rare DX station comes on and NCS knows he will be of interest to all the net. NCS will:
  - (A) move him to the top of the list and give him his turn.
  - (B) take a list of stations wishing to work him.
  - (C) give him a bonus call.
  - (D) treat him as any other check-in on the list.
12. An NCS decides that a special net event would be a fun thing to do. Such a special event may:
  - (A) occur no more than twice per week unless the week of the Eyeball.
  - (B) be held on Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Independence Day, or 3905CCN Founders' Day, or during the Eyeball week.
  - (C) be pre-approved by the Net Coordinator for the affected net.
  - (D) be pre-approved by the Club President.
  - (E) all of the above.
13. When taking a pre-list, an NCS should look for regular and faithful stations first:
  - (A) true
  - (B) false

14. When adding new check-ins to the prelist, prior to the start of the net:
- (A) Masters, OCS/OCM and DX stations should be placed at the top of the list with all other stations added in the order they are received
  - (B) All stations should be added to the list in the order they are received
  - (C) Masters, OCS/OCM, DX and other rare calls such as Alaska or Hawaii, should be on the top of the list with all other stations added as they are received
  - (D) Only Masters should be at the top of the list
15. A station checking in, as a favor to a friend who is not present, may check him in under what circumstances?
- (A) never.
  - (B) only if the other station has asked him to.
  - (C) if the other station usually comes on but is apparently late.
  - (D) only if the other station is related to him.
16. Officers of the Club, as contacts, have a point value for certain awards. For this reason NCS should:
- (A) list them separately.
  - (B) when informed, or known, identify them as officers.
  - (C) announce the number of officers checked in.
  - (D) give them bonus calls.
17. Master degree stations may be checked in at any time. If a Master wishes to check in a club station, that station:
- (A) is checked in with the master degree station.
  - (B) is not checked in.
  - (C) is checked in with its appropriate call area.
  - (D) is checked in wherever the master prefers it.
18. When taking check-ins, certain information about a given check-in should be repeated. Which of the following is correct?
- (A) check-in number, call sign, name, and QSL bureau status.
  - (B) check in number, call sign and QTH of the station checking in, and whether mobile or portable.
  - (C) check-in number, call sign, whether officer, master, YL, operating in a state capital, QRP, or charter member.
  - (D) just the check-in number and call sign.
19. A station checking in may check-in with as many clubs and special event stations as they want
- (A) true
  - (B) false

20. Master's Degree holders may check in at any time check-ins are being taken during any net:
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
21. A station checks in and you find that he or she is new to the net. You should:
- (A) welcome him or her and move on.
  - (B) give him a detailed explanation of the net.
  - (C) welcome him or her and explain that more info will be given later, optionally giving him the Club website URL at this time.
  - (D) do nothing more than announce his call sign.
22. Once a Round has begun, NCS should take check-ins only after:
- (A) approximately 10 minutes then every 15 minutes thereafter.
  - (B) at least 20 minutes then every 10 calls or more.
  - (C) approximately 40 minutes but relays of check-ins at any time.
  - (D) none of the above.
23. On his or her turn, each station has three options. First, to make a call. Second, to "go up for grabs." Third, to go back to net. If he or she fails to get a response from his choice of either the first or second option, he or she then:
- (A) forfeits his or her turn.
  - (B) after either the first or second option fails, goes back to net...
  - (C) is given two calls in the next round because the taking a pass is not possible
  - (D) may ask the NCS for a different relay station
24. When a station does not answer when called for their turn, NCS moves on and the station loses the turn for that round except, unless that station is:
- (A) a portable station.
  - (B) a mobile station.
  - (C) a combo.
  - (D) a master degree holder.
25. A station that checks in just after the first round has started will:
- (A) be given his or her call immediately.
  - (B) be placed at the end of the list and be given a number and a call in turn on the first round.
  - (C) be given a turn in the second round in accordance with his place on the list.
  - (D) be give a turn after "passes" have been picked up.
26. When a station checks in during the last 30 minutes of the net, NCS will:
- (A) extend the net to insure that he/she gets a turn.
  - (B) give that station a call immediately to ensure it a turn.
  - (C) inform the station that this is the last round.
  - (D) encourage other stations to work that station before the net ends.

27. Master's Degree holders are checked in at the top of the list. Should a Master's Degree holder check in at any other time:
- (A) he or she will be given an opportunity to make his/her call on the very next turn.
  - (B) he or she will be given a turn at the beginning of the next call area on the list.
  - (C) he or she will be given his or her turn at the end of the list.
  - (D) he or she will be given his or her turn in the order in which checked in.
28. When either member of a "combo" goes up for grabs, the successful responding station may work that station and the other member(s) along with the associated club or special event call sign if included.
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
29. A station goes "up for grabs" and only one station responds. The station "up for grabs" fails to hear it. NCS may:
- (A) not interfere.
  - (B) assist only after three unsuccessful tries.
  - (C) identify the station to him or her after asking the net if anyone heard more than one responder.
  - (D) ask the station to go "up for grabs" again until he or she can hear the responder without assistance.
30. Mobile and/or portable stations operating from state lines, or multiple state lines with club or special event stations may be given as many lines on the list as needed to accommodate all call signs.
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
31. A mobile or portable station in the situation described in 30 above, on his or her turn:
- (A) may make only one outgoing call or go "up for grabs" once.
  - (B) gets to make a call for each state.
  - (C) gets to make a call for each club or special event.
  - (D) is only allowed to go "up for grabs".
32. A station calling the mobile or portable station in the situation of 30 above may:
- (A) claim all the call signs and states checked in by the mobile or portable station.
  - (B) only claim the first call signs on the list.
  - (C) only choose the two call signs he/she desires.
  - (D) only claim two states.
33. A mobile station parks on a bridge over a river on a state line      He must:
- (A) check in on state lines for the two states of his location.
  - (B) choose one state or the other, since wet lines are not allowed.
  - (C) move his vehicle, since bridges are not allowed.
  - (D) answer from whichever state the calling station wants.



34. Two essential pieces of information that must be received correctly in any contact are the call signs of the stations making the contact and the numbers in each report. To insure correctness, NCS may
- (A) relay, or cause to be relayed, the call signs only.
  - (B) hint at the exchanged reports by saying “not that good” or some other phrase.
  - (C) have a relay station pass the reports.
  - (D) say roger contact if the reports are guessed closely.
35. When one of the stations is a “no relay” station, neither NCS nor any relay station may assist in the contact.
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
36. Which of the following signal reports is not allowed?
- (A) 2 by 1.
  - (B) 3 by 6.
  - (C) 1 by 1.
  - (D) 2 by 5.
37. Without being given an extra call for the round, which of the following is permitted to take his/her call at any time:
- (A) Club President.
  - (B) Chairman of the Board
  - (C) all QSL bureau managers.
  - (D) A and B.
  - (E) A and C.
38. When it becomes obvious that a given contact will not succeed, NCS has the right and duty to terminate that contact.
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
39. In each round, NCS is permitted to make:
- (A) no more than 2 contacts for himself.
  - (B) no more than 3 contacts for himself.
  - (C) no more than 4 contacts for himself.
  - (D) any reasonable number of contacts for himself.
40. In the interest of serving the net, NCS should refrain from:
- (A) making his own contacts before others have worked the desired station.
  - (B) making a contact with a late check-in before most of the list has run.
  - (C) responding to an “up for grabs”, since he can take his calls any time.
  - (D) all of the above.

41. At the end of the net, there remain only three stations on the list that have not made their calls. If a late net is scheduled to start at that time, NCS may at his discretion
- (A) not extend the net a few minutes to accommodate the remaining stations.
  - (B) always conclude the net at the specified time.
  - (C) get permission of the late net NCS to extend the net a few minutes.
  - (D) ask the late net controller to give them bonus calls on the late net.
42. When the list is exhausted with time remaining prior to the end of the net, NCS may close the net as long as he is sure no remaining stations wish a call.
- (A) true.
  - (B) false.
43. Should NCS be relieved for any reason during a net, either because of split net operation or a need to be excused, the relieving NCS must:
- (A) take a new list.
  - (B) start from the top of the list.
  - (C) pick up where the relieved NCS left off.
  - (D) close down the net at the next opportunity.
44. Should an NCS need to leave for some emergency or experience equipment failure during a net and no volunteer is forthcoming, the net will:
- (A) be closed down.
  - (B) be suspended until a volunteer is found.
  - (C) be operated in "free" mode.
  - (D) be turned over for an early late net.

## **OPERATING PRACTICES**

45. A station comes up with an urgent question about the Club rules. As NCS you should:
- (A) answer as best you can and let him know you are not entirely sure.
  - (B) ask anyone on the net to come forward and answer the question.
  - (C) look for Club officers on the list and ask them to respond to the question.
  - (D) discourage questions that are better asked in another forum.
46. Occasionally, the net experiences deliberate QRM. NCS should:
- (A) determine if one of the officers with quick access to FCC monitoring is available.
  - (B) If requested by a club officer, follow the officer's instruction to take a "silent break" until requested to proceed with the net or QSY.
  - (C) shut down the net immediately.
  - (D) strongly admonish the QRMer to leave the frequency.
47. On occasions when QRM is not deliberate, NCS should:
- (A) not allow anyone to move off frequency to chase the QRM.
  - (B) politely ask the interfering station(s) to consider checking in or moving.
  - (C) if necessary, move the net +/- 3 kHz.
  - (D) all of the above.

48. A station has not answered for two rounds. NCS should:
- (A) just scratch him/her off the list.
  - (B) announce that he is automatically checked out.
  - (C) tell the net to cease calling that station.
  - (D) just move on without comment.
49. In the event a mobile station has not been heard for two rounds, NCS should:
- (A) announce that he is checked out but may return after refueling, eating, etc., and may be given his call upon his return.
  - (B) just scratch him/her off the list as he has forfeited his call and must re-check to get a call in the next round.
  - (C) keep calling the station at periodic opportunities to check on his welfare and whether he'll return.
  - (D) tell any calling stations they can have a turn when the mobile returns.
50. When two stations engage in a QSO on subjects unrelated to net activity on either of their turns, NCS should
- (A) cancel their contact for award purposes.
  - (B) be polite but firm in insisting the net must move on.
  - (C) break in and continue the net forcefully.
  - (D) skip over the offending stations in the next round.

**Bonus point question** - may be substituted for any missed question above to obtain total score:

51. An NCS may allow all stations to make two calls per round after the first round. The only exception to this is that if there are more than 25 checkins then the 2<sup>nd</sup> round will be limited to one call.
- (A) true
  - (B) false

**This completes the open book exam.**

When you are satisfied that you understand all of the material on this test and can answer all the questions accurately, please contact our NCS Training Officer for information on how to take the official Net Controller's Test, which will be taken on-line. DO NOT send in a copy of the test above either by email or postal mail. The NCS Training Officer's contact information may be found in the Club Officer Listing on our Club website at: <https://www.3905ccn.org>

After your exam has been evaluated, the NCS Training Officer will then contact you to discuss the exam, and to set up a mutually agreed upon time for a trial run as a Net Control Station followed by a personal private critique of that net.