



DoD INSTRUCTION 4650.02

MILITARY AUXILIARY RADIO SYSTEM

Originating Component:	Office of the DoD Chief Information Officer
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Approved by:	Dr. Kelly E. Fletcher, Performing the Duties of DoD Chief Information Officer

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5144.02, this issuance:

- Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS).
- Establishes MARS organization, membership, and functions.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

1.2. POLICY.

a. MARS capability provides high frequency (HF) radio communications support to DoD through the use of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed, volunteer radio operators, as directed by the Services and coordinated within the DoD.

b. MARS provides:

- (1) Infrastructure-independent, HF radio communications support as requested by DoD.
- (2) HF radio communications support to civil authorities as directed by, or coordinated with, the United States Northern Command and United States Indo-Pacific Command, and in accordance with DoDD 5111.13 and DoDD 3025.18.
- (3) Global HF radio communications to support Combatant Commands’ Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations.
- (4) Radio interface to telephone communications as a backup to the HF Global Communications System for DoD air crews, ground forces, and sea forces providing support for emergency situations, conducting official business, and morale calls.
- (5) The Services’ primary interface with amateur radio operators and coordination with the amateur radio community in the United States.
- (6) Support to the Defense mission critical infrastructure in accordance with DoD Instruction (DoDI) 3020.45.
- (7) Support to DoD contingency communications in accordance with Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3410.03.
- (8) Support to the Defense Continuity of Operations Program in accordance with DoDD 3020.26.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. DOD CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER (DOD CIO).

The DoD CIO:

- a. Provides policy guidance and advice to the DoD Components in matters relating to the objectives, administration, and operations of their respective MARS programs.
- b. In coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security, as needed, provides DoD capabilities to support Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) and Homeland Defense plans and activities, in accordance with DoDD 5111.13.
- c. For the purpose of DSCA, oversees emergency and auxiliary communications initiatives that involve MARS with other Federal departments (e.g., Department of Homeland Security and its subordinate agencies).
- d. Oversees communications initiatives involving MARS with allied military affiliate or military auxiliary radio services (e.g., Canadian Forces Affiliate Radio Service).
- e. Oversees communications initiatives relating to MARS involvement with entities in other countries for emergency or auxiliary radio communication.
 - (1) Such oversight includes relevant existing DoD agreements or arrangements, such as with Canada.
 - (2) If relevant agreements or arrangements do not exist, oversight applies to establishing the agreement, in accordance with DoDI 5530.03 for agreements or arrangements with foreign governments or international organizations.
- f. Convenes an annual stakeholder meeting to coordinate component MARS responsibilities, procedures, and interoperability standards.

2.2. DIRECTOR, DEFENSE INFORMATION SYSTEM AGENCY.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the DoD CIO, and in addition to the responsibilities in DoDI 3020.45, the Director, Defense Information System Agency designates a MARS office of primary responsibility to coordinate and assist the MARS Program.

2.3. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- a. Establish and sponsor a MARS program, as needed, to support DoD mission requirements.

- b. Promote the service MARS program and encourage MARS membership.
- c. Ensure that MARS communication capabilities are interoperable as much as possible with the DoD military HF capabilities and the Department of Homeland Security Shared Resources High Frequency (DHS SHARES HF) Radio Program network.
- d. Promote MARS member participation in the DHS SHARES HF Radio Program.
- e. Plan, execute, and evaluate training exercises and events as needed to ensure MARS members are trained and ready to execute missions in support of DoD and Service-unique requirements.
- f. In conjunction with such tasked MARS missions, establish and support programs to:
 - (1) Promote civilian interest.
 - (2) Recruit qualified volunteers.
 - (3) Sponsor volunteers for basic background checks.
 - (4) Provide access to the Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network Enterprise Alternate Token System, as appropriate.
 - (5) Provide volunteers with suitable training in support communications, as appropriate.
- g. Generate official insignia, logos, and other materials appropriate for recognition and outreach in accordance with DoDI 5535.12.
- h. Provide assistance to amateur radio events that are a part of annual observances of Armed Forces Day, in accordance with Volume 1 of DoDI 5410.19.
- i. In conjunction with the appropriate Service spectrum assignment office, establish and maintain the necessary spectrum required to support Service and DoD missions, including:
 - (1) Ensuring frequency assignments are properly documented and maintained in Spectrum XXI or the current spectrum management data base.
 - (2) Issuing operating instructions to comply with approved frequency assignments, transmit power levels, and authorized modulation modes.

2.4. COMBATANT COMMANDERS.

Combatant Commanders incorporate MARS capabilities into planning efforts, including Primary, Alternate, Contingency and Emergency Plans, and support to other operations.

**2.5. COMMANDER, UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND AND
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND.**

In accordance with DoDD 3025.18, the Commander, United States Northern Command and Commander, United States Indo-Pacific Command direct DSCA activities in the United States within their areas of responsibility.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. MARS MEMBERSHIP.

a. To qualify for a MARS membership, an individual must:

(1) Be 18 years or older and a U.S. citizen or lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence in accordance with Chapter 12 of Title 8, United States Code.

(2) Hold a valid FCC-issued amateur radio license.

(3) Meet and abide by Service-specific MARS membership eligibility and retention requirements in the Service MARS program regulations.

b. Members retain MARS membership by meeting Service-specific standards established by the designated MARS representatives of the Services, including:

(1) Completion of MARS-required training, periodic re-training, and exercise participation.

(2) Maintaining the required on-air-time requirements and submitting the proper report in accordance with Service MARS procedures.

c. Military personnel who register as individual MARS members, must meet all requirements of civilian volunteer MARS members to retain membership. Individual military members can also earn Reserve points based on service in MARS in accordance with DoDI 1215.07 and, in cases of permanent change of station, qualify for weight exemption for transportation of MARS communications equipment in accordance with Appendix A of the Joint Travel Regulations (see definition of professional books, papers, and equipment).

d. Installation Commanders can authorize members to use morale, welfare, and recreation food and beverage activities as sponsored visitors in accordance with DoDI 1015.10.

e. MARS members represent an organized military auxiliary and member conduct must reflect organizational responsibilities. Inappropriate behavior may result in disincentives such as temporary denial of access, up to and including dismissal from MARS.

3.2. MARS STATIONS.

a. Individual MARS stations will be under the control of MARS authorized personnel and must meet all applicable MARS technical standards for operating equipment and communications modes, which may include availability of emergency power, physical and electronic survivability, etc.

b. Military HF radio stations operated by military units are characterized as government military HF stations that may be supported by the Service MARS programs. Military HF

stations may receive MARS call signs and operate on all MARS assigned frequencies, but are not required to meet individual member participation and reporting requirements.

c. Civilian agencies are not authorized to affiliate with, or receive authority to operate in, the DoD MARS program. Civilian agencies will be referred to the DHS SHARES HF Radio Program for licensing, mission support, and HF spectrum authorizations.

d. Service MARS programs may establish MARS club stations, but must be under the control and supervision of individual MARS members or trustees when activated. Each Service MARS program will determine viability and suitability for establishing MARS club stations and establishing stations trustees.

e. MARS stations must be capable of operation in “radio only” modes (i.e., without landlines or the Internet) using Military Standard 188-110D data communication protocols to maintain interoperability with DoD and Federal Government agency radio stations. MARS stations designated to provide solely phone patch capabilities are exempt from the Military Standard 188-110D requirement.

f. MARS stations increase their viability and use ability for DoD contingency communications support if they are equipped with some form of emergency power.

g. Service authorized MARS stations and operators that have met training and deployment requirements may deploy to support DoD Components or activities. The deploying Service or the requesting Component is responsible for issuing the appropriate military orders or invitational travel orders for those operators.

3.3. MARS OPERATING GUIDANCE.

a. MARS stations may:

(1) Operate on any radio frequency assigned to the Service MARS programs using the radio communications modes authorized by the respective Service MARS chief.

(2) Use other DoD available spectrum as authorized and coordinated with the spectrum controlling headquarters.

(3) Use the DHS SHARES HF assigned spectrum when properly registered with the DHS SHARES HF program through their respective MARS program.

b. MARS radio procedures will be based on Allied Communications Publications procedures maintained by the Combined Communications Electronics Board and are available at <https://www.dsp.dla.mil/Specs-Standards/International-Standardization-Documents>.

c. MARS stations will train for and implement HF communications support based on DoD Component tasking. MARS programs can operate as a joint or independent service specific force. The supported DoD Component will designate a lead MARS service, via a planning directive, to use the MARS capability unless it is already specified in approved plans or orders.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
DHS SHARES HF	Department of Homeland Security Shared Resources High Frequency
DoD CIO	DoD Chief Information Officer
DoDD	DoD directive
DoDI	DoD instruction
DSCA	Defense Support of Civil Authorities
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
HF	high frequency
MARS	Military Auxiliary Radio System

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

TERM	DEFINITION
contingency communications support	The provision of radio-based transfer or exchange of information to assist with DoD or civilian authorities' operations during, or in response to, any major disruption of DoD communications networks.
DoD MARS	A DoD program that uses FCC licensed amateur radio operators specially trained in military communication procedures to support DoD HF communication requirements.
military auxiliary	An organized body of volunteers prepared to supplement the uniformed services or any designated civilian authorities by provision of specialized autonomous services when called upon or when situations warrant (e.g., Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary).
professional books, papers, and equipment	Defined in Appendix A of the Joint Travel Regulations

REFERENCES

- Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3410.03, “Residual Capability Assessment Program,” July 20, 2018
- DoD Directive 3020.26, “DoD Continuity Policy,” February 14, 2018
- DoD Directive 3025.18, “Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA),” December 29, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 5111.13, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)),” March 23, 2018
- DoD Directive 5144.02, “DoD Chief Information Officer (DoD CIO),” November 21, 2014, as amended
- DoD Instruction 1015.10, “Military Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs,” July 6, 2009, as amended
- DoD Instruction 1215.07, “Service Credit for Non-Regular Retirement,” July 30, 2019, as amended
- DoD Instruction 3020.45, “Mission Assurance (MA) Construct” August 14, 2018
- DoD Instruction 5410.19, Volume 1, “Community Outreach Activities: Policy Overview and Evaluation Procedures,” September 29, 2021
- DoD Instruction 5530.03, “International Agreements,” December 4, 2019
- DoD Instruction 5535.12, “DoD Branding and Trademark Licensing Program Implementation,” September 13, 2013, as amended
- Joint Travel Regulations, current edition
- Military Standard 188-110D, “Interoperability and Performance Standards for Data Modems,” December 29, 2017
- United States Code, Title 8, Chapter 12