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MAARS Repeater Policy

The following are guidelines for the proper and enjoyable use of the MAARS repeaters.

While the allocated frequency spectrum is open to all hams to use as they see fit within FCC Part 97 rules, a repeater is not a public entity, it is private property. It is free for all licensed amateurs to use, but there are guidelines which must be followed. The equipment belongs to the club and the license is in the name of the Trustee. The Trustee is responsible for ALL transmissions through the repeater as if the Trustee were making the transmission themselves. There is no expectation of privacy of amateur radio communications. Recording of conversations may occur at anytime without notice. <https://www.fcc.gov/guides/interception-and-divulgence-radio-communications>

Remember, while you may be in a conversation with 1 or more other hams, there could be dozens or hundreds of ears out there listening. Take their feelings and concerns into consideration as well as the image of the repeaters and MAARS. We suggest that you avoid some discussion topics, such as

1. Religion
2. Politics
3. Business (you can talk about your profession but not advertise your business)
4. Derogatory remarks directed at any group or individual (ethnic, religious, racial, sexual, insulting).
5. Personal attacks, insults, and similar behavior are inappropriate and will not be tolerated. Such conduct on the repeater demeans the club and the hobby. This includes any name calling either directly or indirectly (i.e.: "so and so is an idiot").
6. Off color language. While various 4 letter (and more) words may be heard in movies and TV, they do not belong on the repeater, PERIOD.
7. Bathroom humor: If you wouldn't tell a joke to a 10 year old child, don't tell it on the radio
8. Never try to talk to a "jammer" or disruptive person. Do not even refer to them on the air, since it lets them know that they have accomplished their purpose, disrupting the repeater. If you can't maintain a QSO through the interference, end it without mentioning the interference. Certainly do not mention or discuss any past disruptions.

The above has nothing to do with censorship. They include subjects which can easily stir up controversy in a public setting. They are items to discuss in a PRIVATE conversation, in person, on the telephone, but not on the repeater.

Also be aware the repeater is not anyone's private resource. During times of the day that a number of people may be at their radio such as morning and afternoon drive times and the noon hour, no one should monopolize the repeater. Be sure to allow for other people to jump in and make use of the repeater. That means pauses between transmissions. Be aware that people may not have anything to contribute to your conversation, but they may need to make a call for someone else to make some arrangements.

And finally, besides anything else, there is the Amateur's Code (as originally written by Paul M. Segal W9EEA in 1928)

The Radio Amateur is:

CONSIDERATE - never knowingly operating in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.

LOYAL - offering loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs and the American Radio Relay League, through which Amateur Radio in the United States is represented nationally and internationally.

PROGRESSIVE - with knowledge abreast of science, a well built and efficient station, and operation beyond reproach.

FRIENDLY - with slow and patient operation when requested, friendly advice and counsel to the beginner, kindly assistance, co-operation and consideration for the interests of others. These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.

BALANCED - Radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.

PATRIOTIC - with station and skill always ready for service to country and community.

If we all follow ALL the above guidelines, repeater use will be a pleasurable experience for those operating as well as those listening.

1. Control Operators represent the Trustee, and therefore the Board and the Club. Their directives on and off the air are to be followed. If you have a problem with something a control operator asks of you, do it anyhow, and contact him/her or a board member later, OFF the air.
2. The MAARS repeaters are open repeaters and all licensed amateurs should be encouraged to use them.
3. Specialized repeater functions are for paid members only. These include all functions requiring DTMF ("touch tone") codes, such as: auto-patch, VOIP modes (ie IRLP & AllStar), DVR messages, etc. If your membership expires, do not use these functions until the treasurer receives your renewal dues.
4. General Communications Priorities – follow these at all times:
 - a. Emergency communications have top priority at all times. We are the Eastern Backbone repeater for Sullivan Weather reporting. Please yield the frequency to the them when they ask for it.
 - b. Normal amateur communications/conversations – In accordance with FCC part 97 rules and MAARS policy, normal ham-to-ham QSO's have top priority on our repeater except for emergency traffic, as already described

- c. Voice Over IP modes (IRLP, AllStar, etc)
- d. Other repeater functions, e.g., keypad tests, DVR messages, etc.
- e. Autopatch/Reverse (non-emergency)

5. Autopatch function:

- a. Autopatch is provided as a service to MAARS members and should be used within FCC rules, common sense, and good amateur operating practices.

6. Reverse autopatch function:

- a. The telephone number and procedure for making reverse patches is not to be given out to large numbers of people.
- b. Reverse patch is not to be treated as a personal paging service. It is for occasional use only. Anyone who consistently gets more than one (or at most two) a week should consider buying a pager or cellular phone.

7. If you need to test equipment (tune antennas, etc.) please make initial tests on an unused simplex frequency and make your final test on the repeater, if you have to. Don't interrupt any other repeater use for testing.

8. Certain radios have advanced features, such as automatic ID's, etc. These can be annoying to other users. If another user or a control operator asks you to turn that or any other feature off, please do. Specifically, the automatic CW ID burst feature is not allowed on the MAARS repeater.

9. Please be sure to leave a pause after the courtesy tone, to insure that anyone that wants to, can get into a QSO. This is especially important during "drive time" when accidents may occur and need to be reported, and when repeater usage is high. As a reminder, VOIP modes can be connected at anytime. Please make it a habit to leave longer pauses after the courtesy tone and one second after keyup.

10. Let control operators and technical committee members handle problems with the repeater. If you experience a problem using the repeater, please contact one of the control operators.

11. Do not discuss how to use the repeater functions on the air. Call any board member or control operator by phone and they will be happy to help you. Don't mention your user autodial number or IUAC number on the air, either.