



AFMARS

(Air Force Military Auxiliary Radio System)

New Membership Guide



Version 1.0

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1.1. MARS Stations.

AFMARS stations may include military MARS stations, civil agency MARS stations, MARS club stations, and individual MARS stations. A MARS individual station is a MARS Member who operates appropriate equipment performing the duties assigned to their station. Military, civil agency or club MARS stations may associate with more than one MARS Service. Individual MARS stations may associate with only one MARS Service.

1.2. Civilian Volunteer Minimum Eligibility.

All individual civilian volunteer MARS must meet minimum eligibility criteria for membership in AFMARS as outlined below. Because AFMARS is a dynamic volunteer organization with the mission of supporting multiple agencies and organizations through the Department of Defense, specific membership requirements may be amended at any time to better position AFMARS to meet its mission responsibilities.

Except for adjustments to minimum participation requirements, any additional membership requirements imposed on AFMARS members that go beyond what is contained in AF MARS MOIv1 – 2 Aug 2017 shall be applied to new members entering the AFMARS program and shall not be imposed retroactively on active members in good standing.

1.2.1. Eligibility Criteria.

1.2.1.1. Age.

1.2.1.1.1. Minimum age of members is 18 years.

1.2.1.1.2. In order to maintain a healthy flow of new members into AFMARS, working relationships with well-established youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, and other such programs, should be developed. These relationships should be based on offering amateur radio and MARS exposure to these youth organizations. All contacts with the organizations shall be in accordance with those organizations' rules and regulations.

1.2.1.2. Citizenship.

Applicants and/or current members must be citizens of the United States, or lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residency under the provisions of Title 8, United States Code, Chapter 12 (as revised), and reside within the borders of the United States, its territories, or possessions. This applies to alien residents who are U.S. military members stationed overseas under an overseas military command's jurisdiction.

1.2.1.3. FCC License Class.

Applicants and/or current members must hold a valid amateur radio operator's license issued by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

1.2.1.4. Station Requirements.

1.2.1.4.1. Applicants and/or current members must have an operational HF radio station prior to acceptance into the AFMARS program.

1.2.1.4.2. HF stations must be capable of operating on MARS frequencies, assigned by Region AFMARS officials.

1.2.1.4.3. New HF stations must have the capability of operating voice and digital modes specified by HQ USAF MARS. Digital mode is defined as any computer-generated signal other than continuous wave (CW).

1.2.1.4.4. Unless specifically exempted from this requirement, all HF radio equipment must have a frequency stability and tolerance of +/- 20 Hz as set by the NTIA.

1.2.2. VHF Requirements.

1.2.2.1. See AF MARS MOI v1- 2 Aug 2017 Section 16.0 for more information on VHF operations.

1.2.2.2. If VHF is used, it shall be used to complement the HF station, providing critical first mile/last mile” connectivity. Unless specifically exempted from the NTIA requirement, all VHF equipment must not exceed a frequency deviation of +/- 2.5 kHz, and have a channel spacing of 12.5 kHz (or less).

1.2.3. Contact Information.

1.2.3.1. Members are charged with the responsibility to ensure that email addresses, telephone numbers, and members’ mailing address is kept up to date by prompt notification to the State MARS Director (SMD).

1.2.3.2. Email is the basic vehicle for all administrative actions and correspondence in AMARS. For that reason it is mandatory that a current Email address be provided and that members ensure this information is kept up to date, and read frequently. Access to the Internet is required for membership, although use of the Internet at a public venue such as the local public library for email and document downloading is acceptable.

1.2.4. Net Control Station.

All new AFMARS members are required to participate in Net Control Station (NCS) training, as these skills may be required in the event of an actual incident. Members in NCS training shall work with the respective National, or Region Training Manager to complete NCS training.

2.1. Deployment Requirements.

2.1.1. Willing and Able.

AFMARS members willing and able to deploy on-site to provide communications support in the event of an emergency or incident where such support is requested must be certified as knowledgeable in the Incident Command System (ICS). This requires successful completion of FEMA courses IS-100b, IS-200b, IS-700a, and IS-800b. Successful completion of FEMA course IS-802 is also encouraged but is not mandatory. Whether or not members volunteer for deployment all AFMARS members are encouraged to complete these FEMA courses, which can be taken on line at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute website: (<http://training.fema.gov/is/nims.asp>).

2.1.2. Course Completion AF Form 3661.

2.1.2.1. Members who complete the FEMA IS-100b, IS-200b, IS-700a, and IS-800b courses shall provide a copy of the FEMA course completion certificate to the members' SMD. Upon completion of all four courses the SMD shall issue an AF Form 3661 indicating the course numbers completed and the date of each certificate. This shall become part of the member's personnel record. Based on the AF Form 3661, the National Records Manager shall annotate the national register.

2.1.2.2. A copy of the AF Form 3661 shall be distributed to the NRM, RRM, RMD, and the individual.

2.2. Individual Responsibilities.

2.2.1. Individual membership applications shall be made using the membership application form.

2.2.2. Each new applicant shall be provided a copy of the AFMARS application form, as well as he contact information of the appropriate SMD.

2.2.3. The new applicant shall send the completed application form to the SMD. The SMD shall review the application for completeness, accuracy, eligibility, and verification of FCC license, and then forward it to the RMD for processing.

2.2.4. The RMD shall assign an "AFT#xx" call sign, enter the information into the AFMARS database program, initiate an AF Form 3661 assigning the individual to the Region training net. The AF Form 3661 shall be the authorization for the individual to operate on the AFMARS training nets. A MARS training status "AFT" AF Form 3666 MARS Station License and ID Card will be issued to the trainee to show MARS affiliation during the training period.

2.2.5. The RMD shall distribute AF Form 3661 to the applicant, RMD, RTM, RRM, SMD, and the NRM.

2.2.6. After successful completion of the training, the RTM shall notify the RMD, SMD, and individual. The RMD shall create a new AF Form 3661 to change the call sign by changing of the “AFT” prefix to “AFA” prefix call sign and include an initial primary assignment.

2.2.7. Unless otherwise specified, “Primary Assignment” shown on the member’s AF Form 3661, can be one of State, Region, or National AFMARS HF traffic nets. Members may be assigned to the Phone Patch, Mission Support, TRANSGLOBAL networks, or a Base Support Team, as their primary assignment.

2.2.8. The RMD shall forward the new AF Form 3661 assigning the station its call sign, initial primary net assignment, and notification of successful completion of training to the Chief USAF MARS shall issue AF Form 3666. These documents shall be distributed to Chief, USAF MARS, NRM, RMD, RTM, RRM, SMD, and individual.

2.2.9. Except as otherwise stated in this MOI, the SMD is responsible for initiating and distributing as appropriate an AF Form 3661 to reflect any changes in the individual member’s primary net assignment, station capabilities, or operating status. If any PII information is included on the AF Form 3661 the data must be encrypted for transmission only (EFTO), else the use of the individual’s generic call sign is sufficient and does not need to be EFTO.

2.2.10. Initial member training must be completed within one hundred eighty (180) days of the issuance of AF Form 3661 by the RMD. Returning MARS members, following a break in service exceeding six months, must attend the training course.

2.2.11. An extension to initial member training may be approved by the RMD upon good cause and prior request by the trainee and the SMD. If the extension to initial member training is approved by the RMD, the RMD shall prepare and distribute AF Form 3661 back to the trainee, RMD, RTM, RRM, SMD, and NRM.

2.2.12. No waivers for the training requirement shall be allowed with the exception of active duty or Reserve personnel. Personnel transferred from other MARS services, however, or with prior AFMARS membership, may be evaluated for waiver of the training requirement on a case-by-case basis by the RMD.

2.2.13. Trainees shall be provided Initial Net Control Station training in conformance with the AFMARS National Training Manual.

2.2.14. For new members in training a certificate of completion of security web training listed in Section 6.4 is required prior to issuance of the individual “AFA#xx” call sign.

2.2.15. The establishment of a BBS, ALE, MSN, or a Phone Patch Station is not authorized while in training status.

3.1. Training Material.

Depending upon your membership additional training may be required. You may choose to specialize providing for mission requirements that may be necessary. All training and training materials shall be based upon the AF MARS MOIv1 – 2 Aug 2017, and the following publications:

3.1.1. ACP-121 (I) Allied Communications Publication “Communications Instructions General” (October, 2010)

3.1.2. ACP-125 (G) Allied Communications Publication “Communications Instructions Radiotelephone Procedures” (November 2016)

3.1.3. ACP-126 (C) Allied Communications Publication “Communications Instructions Teletypewriter (Teleprinter) Procedures” (May, 1989)

3.1.4. ACP-127 (G) Allied Communications Publication “Communications Instructions Tape Relay Procedures” (November, 1988)

3.1.5. ACP-127 (G) U. S. Supp-1 (K) supplement to ACP-127 (G) (November, 2007)

3.1.6. ACP-131 (F) Allied Communications Publication “Communications Instructions - Operating Signals” (April, 2009)

3.1.7. Message Nr. 014, Chief AFMARS, 082025 Sep 2014 (“AFMARS Way Ahead”)

3.1.8. Message Nr. 014, Chief AFMARS, 132100Z Oct 2015 (rescinding joint MARS SOP)

3.1.9. Message Nr. 001, Chief AFMARS, 151800Z Jan 2015 (authorizing abbreviated call signs)

3.1.10. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 6241.04C “Policy and Procedures for Management and Use of USMTF” (20 APR 2012)

3.1.11. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 4650-02 (23 DEC 2009)

3.1.12. MOI, 2016

3.1.13. Air Force MARS National Training Manual, (NTM)

3.1.14. Air Force MARS Messaging Manual, (MMM)

3.1.15. Air Force MARS Messaging Manual Annex I, (FOUO)

3.1.16. Additional material as deemed appropriate by the Chief, USAF MARS, and the NTM.

3.1.17. Regions may write supplements to the *AFMARS National Training Manual* and the *AFMARS Emergency Communications Plan*. These supplements shall not change the basic content, but should provide additional information that is specific to the Region.

4.1. How to apply for AFMARS Membership

Do not be daunted by this guide. Even if you are new to Ham operations. To find out more call, email, or visit our WEB site:

Call: 1-888-778-MARS (6277)

Email: afmars@us.af.mil

WEB Address: www.mars.af.mil