

“AN EFFECTIVE NCS”

One thing I have really enjoyed is being a Net Control Station. While there have been various guidelines set for each of the nets I have ran, there are three things I want to communicate to you this evening, that I consider to be Vitally important to Being “AN EFFECTIVE NCS”.

#1 In order to be a good and effective NCS you must posses **“good people skills.”** In other words, you must like people and it needs to show. You must learn to be an effective communicator and be able to communicate successfully with the members on your net. They are all volunteers and you can’t just fire then, and most are probably not your children either, so that eliminates the corporal punishment idea. So we must be able to bring about any needed correction by using our communication skills. If you don’t have them, takes notes from people who do, and learn them. Realize each member is an individual person and you may need to interact differently with different members. Some may need a real gentle nudge to understand an issue and some may need to have it spelled out more clearly, but always with kindness. Being Rude is never an effective communication skill and will always make things worse. The analogy I will use the evening is one of a police officer, they must always enforce the law. Sometimes a kind warning to the speedy driver is all that is necessary. For some situations a citation is required, but it is never necessary to shoot someone in the foot, for simply speeding and there’s never a time that a situation is helped by being rude. A good NCS will use only the amount of force in speech necessary to effect a proper outcome, yet he is willing to use the necessary force “so to speak” without being rude, to ensure the NET is under his control and is following proper procedures which bring me to number two.

#2 As NCS you must be in command to a point. That point being the standard and purpose of the net. All Nets (that the training on this net is designed to prepare you for) fall under the ARRL standard procedures and protocols. As the NCS you are in charge of the net, and you should never do anything that would be counter-productive to the net, and never attempt to change the ARRL standards or procedures to suit yourself. If everyone just made the rules up as you go, there would be no continuity. Just imagine with me for a moment. You are called on during an emergency to be NCS to relieve another NCS that greatly needs a break, only to find chaos. Why is it chaos? Because the NCS before you chose to use a set of rules and procedures that sounded best to him, or he allowed those on his net to use the procedures and protocols that sounded best to them. Chances are he was a NCS in name only as the Control part is lost, as soon as the NCS is no longer willing to be in command and do what must be done in order to keep the proper order of things and make sure the necessary guidelines are followed by all. Don’t

forget the first principal while trying to keep the second. It is NOT our goal to drive off any amateurs from the nets. NCS should be POLITE and helpful.

The NCS and NM should remember that the goal is to:

- (a.) Pass traffic.
- (b.) Conduct a training atmosphere.
- (c.) Have fun.
- (d.) Be ready to serve in times of disaster or emergency- in no particular order.

#3 You can never enforce a rule by breaking one. Most of you have heard the term practice what you preach. In other words, do your very best at all times during the net, to follow your ARRL net standards and instructions before you insist that your participants do the same. Anything less would be equivalent to our police office in my first analogy. Suppose he told you that he must issue you a citation for speeding and during the process of you encounter with him, he revealed to you he speeds all the time and no-one will say anything to him because he is a law enforcement officer. While his statement might be an honest one, no doubt you wouldn't gain a lot of respect for him. And you wouldn't think it fair for him to try to enforce the laws he himself breaks. Again I say, don't forget the first principal in the process. Your good example and a kind word should be all that is required.

SUMMARY

If we use tact, we can effectively accomplish our goals as a NCS. Those goals being, to have fun and enjoy our hobby, practice for emergencies, as well as send-receive and direct NTS messages. All of these goals can be met, with all of the net participants following standard procedures, protocols and net instructions. Do your very best to follow the procedures and protocols as NCS and expect the very best from your fellow net participant's. People have a way of living up to what they know you expect, and to the example you set. "It is not everyday that someone's life may depend on what we do, it is quite likely that someone's comfort and/or the assistance they need may be slowed however, if our discipline in following instructions, accuracy of message handling or net procedures and protocols are not up to what they should be."