



# Department of Defense INSTRUCTION

**NUMBER** 4650.02  
December 23, 2009

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ASD(NII)/DoD CIO

**SUBJECT:** Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS)

**References:** See Enclosure 1

1. **PURPOSE.** This Instruction reissues DoD Directive (DoDD) 4650.2 (Reference (a)) as a DoD Instruction (DoDI) in accordance with the guidance in DoDI 5025.01 (Reference (b)) and the authority in DoDD 5144.1 (Reference (c)) to establish policy, assign responsibilities, and provide procedures for MARS (formerly the Military Affiliate Radio System) and update its organization, membership, and functions.
  
2. **APPLICABILITY.** This Instruction 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 the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to collectively as the “DoD Components”).
  
3. **DEFINITIONS.** Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purposes of this Instruction.
  - a. **contingency radio communications support.** The provision of radio-based transfer or exchange of information to assist with DoD or civilian authorities’ operations during, or responses to, any major disruption of DoD or other communications networks, such as those associated with official national security or emergency preparedness events or activities.
  
  - b. **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).

4. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. MARS capability for contingency radio communications support to U.S. Government operations shall be provided through the utilization of organized volunteer radio operators and operating facilities under the appropriate authorities, as directed by and coordinated within the Department of Defense.

b. MARS shall provide contingency radio communications support to the DoD Components.

c. MARS shall provide contingency radio communications support to civil authorities at all levels, in fulfillment of DoD responsibilities under DoDD 5111.13 (Reference (d)).

d. MARS shall provide health, morale, and welfare radio communications support to military members, civilian employees and contractors of DoD Components, and civil agency employees and contractors, when in remote or isolated areas, in contingencies or whenever appropriate.

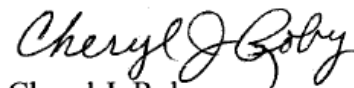
5. RESPONSIBILITIES. See Enclosure 2.

6. PROCEDURES. See Enclosure 3.

7. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS. The reporting requirement in paragraph 4.f. of Enclosure 2 has been assigned Report Control Symbol DD-NII(A)2361 in accordance with DoD 8910.1-M (Reference (e)).

8. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release and is available on the Internet from the DoD Issuances Web Site at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives>.

9. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Instruction is effective immediately.



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Enclosures:

1. References
2. Responsibilities
3. Procedures

ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES

- (a) DoD Directive 4650.2, "Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS)," January 26, 1998 (hereby canceled)
- (b) DoD Instruction 5025.01, "DoD Directives Program," October 28, 2007
- (c) DoD Directive 5144.1, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Networks and Information Integration/DoD Chief Information Officer (ASD(NII)/DoD CIO)," May 2, 2005
- (d) DoD Directive 5111.13, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs (ASD(HD&ASA)),", January 16, 2009
- (e) DoD 8910.1-M, "Department of Defense Procedures for Management of Information Requirements," June 30, 1998
- (f) DoD 4160.21-M, "Defense Materiel Disposition Manual," August 18, 1997
- (g) Memorandum of Understanding Between Transportation Security Administration and US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Army Signal Command, "US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Army Signal Command (NETCOM/9th ASC) Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) Support to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA)," July 7, 2006<sup>1</sup>
- (h) DoD Directive 5410.18, "Public Affairs Community Relations Policy," November 20, 2001
- (i) DoD Directive 3222.3, "DoD Electromagnetic Environmental Effects (E3) Program," September 8, 2004
- (j) National Security Presidential Directive/NSPD 51 / Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD 20, "National Continuity Policy," May 9, 2007
- (k) DoD Instruction 1215.07, "Service Credit for Reserve Retirement," November 18, 2005
- (l) Joint Travel Regulations, Volume 2, "Department of Defense Civilian Personnel," current edition
- (m) DoD Instruction 1015.10, "Military Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Programs," July 6, 2009
- (n) DoD Directive 5100.35, "Military Communications-Electronics Board (MCEB)," March 10, 1998

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<sup>1</sup> See [http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/07/27/100/TSA\\_MOU.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2006/07/27/100/TSA_MOU.pdf)

ENCLOSURE 2

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR NETWORKS AND INFORMATION INTEGRATION/DoD CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER (ASD(NII)/DoD CIO). The ASD(NII)/DoD CIO shall:

a. Provide overall policy guidance and advice to the DoD Components in matters relating to the objectives, administration, and operations of their respective MARS programs.

b. Provide oversight for emergency and auxiliary communications initiatives that involve MARS with other Federal departments, such as the Department of Homeland Security and its subordinate agencies, in providing defense support of civil authorities (DSCA). DSCA activities shall be coordinated through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs (ASD(HD&ASA)) in accordance with Reference (d).

c. Provide oversight for communications initiatives involving MARS with allied military affiliate or military auxiliary radio services such as the Canadian Forces Affiliate Radio Service.

d. Provide oversight for communications initiatives relating to MARS involvement with any other entities in other countries for the purpose of emergency or auxiliary radio communication. Where relevant DoD agreements exist, such as with Canada, the oversight responsibility would apply to those agreements; where such agreements do not exist, the oversight responsibility would apply to their establishment.

e. Convene a conference annually for the purpose of coordinating all MARS responsibilities, procedures, interoperability, and related activities, to include development of and agreements on joint technical and operating standards, with conference support rotated among the DoD Components.

2. ASD(HD&ASA). The ASD(HD&ASA) shall have primary responsibility for the MARS DSCA mission, in accordance with Reference (d).

3. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LOGISTICS AND MATERIAL READINESS (ASD(L&MR)). The ASD(L&MR), under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, shall provide policy guidance and advice on management and standardization of any DoD Component-funded MARS supply and equipment programs, in accordance with DoD 4160.21-M (Reference (f)).

4. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

a. Encourage participation in MARS. This may be accomplished by establishing and funding an active MARS program within each Military Department, which shall then assign a MARS-licensed staff representative to manage operations, readiness, planning, procedural and technical development, documentation, standards, training, equipment, program and membership administration, and other matters necessary for mission accomplishment. If such a program is not established, other efforts undertaken by a Military Department to encourage participation in MARS shall be disclosed in an annual report (see paragraph 4.f.).

b. Ensure that any MARS communication capabilities established are available and mutually interoperable, at the individual station and network level, with other Services' MARS, and with appropriate civil authorities' radio services. MARS must be capable of operation in "radio only" modes (without landlines or the Internet) and sustainable on emergency power (when public utility power has failed), and some MARS stations must be transportable for timely deployment.

c. Encourage MARS participation in the Shared Resources High Frequency (HF) Radio Program under the National Communications System, which is responsible for promoting interoperability between HF radio systems used by the Federal departments and agencies. Encourage relationships between MARS and civil agencies, such as the relationship between U.S. Army MARS and the Transportation Security Administration (Reference (g)). Encourage MARS participation in the Federal Partnership for Interoperable Communications, the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, and/or other programs, partnerships, and associations that advocate, facilitate, and promote interoperable radio communications used by Federal departments and agencies and State and local officials. Any such efforts shall be disclosed in an annual report (see paragraph 4.f.).

d. Routinely plan and execute specific communications missions for any MARS capabilities established; these missions must include realistic message traffic for relay between military and civilian organizations, with subsequent evaluation. Planning must also include preparation for the pre-selection and deployment of a sufficient number of qualified MARS members, with appropriate support as required, to provide MARS capabilities in timely response to crises.

e. In conjunction with any MARS activities, establish programs to promote civilian interest, recruit qualified volunteers, sponsor them for basic background checks, and furnish them suitable training in contingency support communications. Generate official insignia, logos, and other materials appropriate for recognition and outreach in accordance with fiscal law requirements. Provide assistance to those Amateur Radio events that are part of annual observances of Armed Forces Day, in accordance with DoDD 5410.18 (Reference (h)).

f. Provide an annual report to the ASD(NII)/DoD CIO, to include mission activities; readiness and membership levels; relationships with the other Military Departments' MARS, civil authorities' radio services, and allied radio services; budget issues coordinated with Service Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System submissions; and other matters that may be relevant to the status or future of MARS.

5. COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS. The Commanders of the Combatant Commands, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall each designate a command MARS representative to ensure active coordination with the MARS representatives of other DoD Components; each command MARS representative shall:

a. Assist with, and if necessary sponsor, the organization of MARS operators, facilities, and frequencies necessary to provide contingency radio communications support.

b. Assist with, and if necessary sponsor, provision of appropriate MARS operations, to include personnel, command-related training, use of approved MARS frequencies, and advocacy for inclusion of MARS in contingency planning and exercises.

6. HEADS OF THE DoD COMPONENTS. The Heads of the DoD Components shall:

a. Upon the request of the MARS representative of a Service staff or command, provide a space within their facilities on a non-cost basis, suitable for the installation and operation of a MARS station capable of providing contingency radio communications support. If the proposed MARS location requires compliance testing for electromagnetic environmental effects (E3), the MARS request may be rejected, so that Components do not bear the costs of testing; see DoDD 3222.3 (Reference (i)). However, if the MARS station will operate within technical parameters approved for that location (e.g., frequency bands, transmit power levels), or if a Component finds there are no relevant E3 issues at that location, E3 concerns will be considered satisfied.

b. If hosting a MARS station within their facilities, at the request of that station's trustee, provide for appropriate access to the MARS station by MARS station operators and personnel providing contingency radio communications support, to include suitable forms of identification.

ENCLOSURE 3

PROCEDURES

1. MARS MEMBERSHIP

- a. Military membership is open to qualified active duty, Guard, and Reserve personnel.
- b. Civil agency membership is open to qualified personnel who report to civil authorities or their supporting organizations, to include nongovernmental organizations, in accordance with National Security Presidential Directive 51 (Reference (j)).
- c. Individual membership may result in operating privileges at military, civil agency, club, or individual stations; therefore, individual membership is open to U.S. citizens who meet age, education, and other criteria imposed by a DoD Component MARS office. These criteria shall include a suitable Amateur Radio Operator's License issued by the Federal Communications Commission and registered with a DoD Component MARS office, to ensure interoperability with the Amateur Radio Service across its spectrum; and these criteria may include security clearances, facility access, and eligibility for building passes as first responders.
- d. The combined military, civil agency, and individual membership will strive to ensure that MARS personnel responding to crisis situations (whether local, State, or national) are prepared to be networked together to provide timely coordinated contingency support communications when conventional communications are unavailable, or are likely to become unavailable.
- e. Members retain MARS membership by meeting such standards of service as may be established by the designated MARS representatives of the Military Departments and/or the commands, to include successful completion of MARS-required training or periodic re-training; adequate participation in official MARS activities that require radio operation (unless excused by competent authority), and such other applicable standards as MARS leadership may establish.
- f. Military members can earn Reserve points based on service in MARS in accordance with DoDI 1215.07 (Reference (k)) and, in cases of permanent change of station, qualify for weight exemption for transportation of MARS communications equipment in accordance with Appendix A, Change 518 of the Joint Travel Regulations, Volume 2 (Reference (l)).
- g. All members can be considered for benefits associated with DoD civilian service, such as access to DoD morale, welfare, and recreation Category C recreational facilities in accordance with DoDI 1015.10 (Reference (m)), credit unions associated with the Department of Defense, and military ceremonies.
- h. MARS members are considered to represent an organized military auxiliary, and member conduct must reflect organizational responsibilities. Inappropriate behavior may therefore result in disincentives such as temporary denial of access, up to and including dismissal from MARS.

## 2. MARS STATIONS

a. All MARS stations shall be under the control of MARS licensed personnel and must meet all applicable MARS standards for operating equipment and communications modes, which may include availability of emergency power, physical and electronic survivability, etc. This applies to the following categories of MARS stations:

(1) Military MARS stations established under the auspices of a military command and/or activity, and operated or maintained by designated military and/or civilian personnel, to include appropriately assigned volunteer MARS members.

(2) Civil agency MARS stations established, operated, and maintained by civil authorities or by recognized nongovernmental organizations supporting civil authorities.

(3) MARS club stations established under the auspices of a military or civilian amateur radio club, and operated and maintained by volunteers. A MARS station license must be issued as an additional license to a club member serving as MARS station trustee.

(4) Individual MARS stations established, operated, and maintained by military, civil authority, or civilian volunteers authorized to operate on assigned MARS frequencies.

b. Military, civil agency, or club MARS stations may affiliate with more than one MARS Service. Military commands or military activities shall affiliate with their sponsoring Service MARS, unless operating in areas where only another Service's MARS is authorized or available.

## 3. MARS OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

a. MARS stations may operate on any frequency assigned to MARS, using any lawful mode of radio communication consistent with authorized channel bandwidth in support of the MARS mission; however, MARS standards for interoperability must be observed.

b. Under the long-standing protocols of U.S. and international radio regulatory bodies, MARS is authorized to operate on any U.S. Government frequency in support of the MARS mission, with the permission of the sponsoring government entity or licensing authority. MARS is authorized to operate on non-U.S. frequencies in support of the MARS mission with permission from the non-U.S. entities controlling those frequencies.

c. MARS radio procedures shall be based on Allied Communications Publications procedures maintained by the Combined Communications Electronics Board in coordination with the Military Communications Electronics Board in accordance with DoDD 5100.35 (Reference (n)).

d. The designated MARS representatives of the Military Departments and/or the commands shall establish and issue operating boundaries (e.g., frequency bands, transmit power levels) for DSCA activities.