



CERT – MERT HAM Communications Reference

This reference provides valuable information and resources on communication processes between CERT communities, the Marion County Emergency Radio Team (MERT) and local/regional organizations. CERT Radio Operators can use the following information to communicate, monitor and verify that established procedures are followed when receiving and reporting incident information during emergency conditions.

Marion Emergency Radio Team - MERT (also Marion County Emergency Radio Communications Team)

General Information – MERT was established to provide communications support to areas such as Shelters, Healthcare Facilities, Points of Distribution, all Marion County CERT communities and local/regional groups during times of disasters. They assist with moving valuable communications between agencies and remote locations about storm conditions, resource needs and important reports/requests. The following information details the procedural and operational aspects of MERT. More information at:

<https://www.kg4nxo.com/contact/>

MERT Command – MERT personnel are volunteers who are trained in the communication protocols established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and administered locally by the Marion County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) Division of Emergency Management. All the members are fully background vetted, FCC licensed radio operators and certified by FEMA in the Incident Command System (ICS) procedures.



MERT Radio Facilities (Primary) – A MERT communications radio room is located at the MCSO Emergency Operations Center at 692 NW 30th Ave, Ocala, FL. More information about the Division of Emergency Management is at:

<http://www.marionso.com/emergency-management>

MERT Area Map – A Marion County General Location map which includes MCSO, EOC, Emergency Shelters, MERT/ARES/SKYWARN repeaters and HAM participants is available at:

<http://www.kg4nxo.com/data/mc%20map%20with%20locations%201.pdf>

CERT Reporting Frequencies:

These reporting frequencies have been designated by MCSO & MERT for use during emergency events.

CERT report primary repeater:	KJ4CLL @ 145.330 MHz	Offset: -600 kHz	CTCSS: 123 Hz
CERT report backup repeater:	K4GSO @ 146.610 MHz	Offset: -600 kHz	CTCSS: 123 Hz



[Note: Visit KG4NXO.com – “CERT Group” for more information.]

[illegible]

Notes:

- Completed ICS 213 forms may be requested by MERT to document all CERT reports. Local CERT community operators should maintain forms for their records.
- Contact information for the sender and receiver can be added for communications purposes to confirm resource/report details.
- Form ICS 213 is available at: <https://training.fema.gov/icsresource/icsforms.aspx>

GENERAL MESSAGE (ICB 213)			
1. Incident Name (Optional)			
2. To (Name and Position)			
3. From (Name and Position)		4. Date	5. Time
6. Subject			
7. Message			
8. Approved By: Name Signature Position/Title			
9. Reply			
10. Requested By: Name Position/Title Signature			
11. Remarks			

Details: MERT "Open Net" test for all CERT HAMS is scheduled each Thursday @ 7:30 PM on repeater KJ4CLL at 145.330 MHz, Repeater Offset -600kHz with CTCSS tone 123 Hz. NET control will call for check-ins (see Standard Protocol below). [Note: It is recommended that CERT Ham operators join by 7:25 PM.]

Standard “Open Net” HAM check-in Protocol:

The following is the current radio protocol used with the CERT “Open Net” check-in.

- Announced 10 min and 5 min prior to Net: “Calling All Station - The MERT KJ4CLL Net will start in _____Minutes”
- Calling All Stations - Does anyone need to use this frequency before the CERT – MERT net begins?
- Good Evening Everyone. This is (name) _____, (call) _____and I will be the Net Control Station for tonight’s net on KJ4CLL.



- The net will last approximately 15 minutes. This will be done using the Roll Call procedure.
- All stations – please monitor this channel for traffic before transmitting.
- When your station is called, thank you for providing your call sign, name, general Marion County location, CERT community and general signal quality report.
- Roll Call begins now.....

MERT Assigned Intra-Community HAM Frequencies

The following HAM, 2 Meter, radio frequency assignments have been made to reduce communications conflicts within some Marion County communities during drills and emergency conditions.

Additionally, the assignments also permit direct inter-community radio traffic when needed for joint training drills and whenever emergency support is requested between CERT's. These frequency assignments are to be used only by FCC licensed Ham Operators. [Note: All frequencies are Simplex.]

Bellevue	146.400	Marion Oaks	146.490	Salt Springs	146.595
Cherrywood	146.415	Meadow Wood Farms	146.505	Stonecrest	147.420
Dunnellon	146.430	Oak Run	146.535	Spruce Creek CC	147.550
Ocklawaha	146.445	Ocala Palms	146.550	Spruce Creek Preserve	147.450
Hill Top Estates	146.460	On Top of the World	146.565	Stone Creek	147.465
Marion Landing	146.475	Paddock Park South	146.580	Summer Glenn	147.480

Marion County, FL HAM Net Information

The following information details additional Marion County HAM networks supporting MCSO/MERT operations. Current information at: <https://www.kg4nxo.com/mert-information/2-meter-nets/>

Open Net Tests:

ARES/ SKYWARN – Wednesday 7:30 PM – – K4GSO 146.610 -600 kHz CTCSS: 123 Hz

Silver Springs Radio Club – Monday 7:30 P.M. – K4GSO 146.610 -600 kHz CTCSS: 123 Hz

Friendship Radio Club – Tuesday 7:30 P.M. – K4GSO 146.610 -600 kHz CTCSS: 123 Hz

MERT Shelters/EOC **D-Star Net** -Thursday – 7:0 P.M. --- KK4DFC 146.790

Central Florida D-Star Net – Thursday 9:00 PM – KG4NXO-U 443.875 D-Star Reflector 037C



Notes:

Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES)

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.



SKYWARN®

SKYWARN is a national network of volunteer severe weather spotters. The spotters are trained by local National Weather Service Forecast Offices (Jacksonville, FL) on how to spot severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hail and flooding.



State of Florida HF HAM Nets (70 cm Band):

SARnet: The Statewide Amateur Radio Network (SARnet) is a network of linked 70 cm Band voice repeaters serving the State of Florida (especially FDOT). SARnet Ocala: 444.025 MHz, CTCSS 123 Hz. For more information on SARnet: <https://www.sarnetfl.com/>

Florida & Georgia HF Net List can be reviewed at: <https://k4br.com/florida-hf-nets/>

MERT Training (Marion Emergency Radio Team)

MERT personnel support local, regional and state Emergency Management organizations during critical events through their knowledge and understanding of FEMA procedures, MCSO Division of Emergency Management procedures and amateur radio "HAM" operations. Their training increases the understanding and skills of providing reliable communications alternatives during emergency events. While the major focus is directed towards the technical aspects of HAM radio operation, members learn, practice and review:

- FCC Rules & Regulations covering HAM Radio operations
- FEMA/MCSO procedural and operational requirements
- Emergency response protocols and reporting requirements
- ARES* and SKYWARN* coordination
- Special operational systems like D-Star, digital messaging via **Winlink** procedures, etc.
- HAM radio programing & operation
- Antenna design, fabrication & use
- Transmission line operation
- Safety procedures

MERT Exercises

Special Exercises are also used to simulate potential events requiring MERT members to practice the skills and knowledge learned in supporting the emergency incident communication needs required by Emergency Management organizations. A special event held annually is MERT 20X which invites all amateur radio operators to join MERT personnel making radio contacts locally, state-wide, national and internationally. Additionally, Marion County Sheriff's Office, MERT, CERT and others conduct group exercises testing and verifying communications systems operation in preparing for emergencies.



The following photographs document an exercise conducted in February 2020 by the Division of Emergency Management and MERT personnel testing communications from Salt Springs to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Marion County.



ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service is a special community service organization created by the ARRL (American Radio Relay League).

SKYWARN - A national network of volunteer severe weather spotters. The spotters are trained by local National Weather Service Forecast Offices on how to spot severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hail and flooding.