About Army MARS

The U.S. Army Military Auxiliary Radio System (AMARS) is an elite group of dedicated citizen volunteers who support the Department of Defense (DoD) in a variety of circumstances, including complex catastrophes and cyber denied or impaired conditions. MARS is a DoD program that trains, organizes and tasks volunteer Amateur Radio operators. AMARS citizen-volunteers demonstrate the Army's values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage, freely and generously giving their time and resources as a reflection and measure of devotion to our nation. The world has changed dramatically since the MARS structure was first developed and implemented but what has not changed is the dedication of these citizens to serve.

Army MARS Today

The US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM) is the Department of the Army (DA) executive agency for AMARS and has Headquarters at Fort Huachuca, AZ. NETCOM is the Army's premier Information Technology Service Provider and cyber protection force that plans, engineers, installs, integrates, protects, defends and operates Army Cyberspace enabling mission command through all phases of Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational operations. NETCOM reports to US Army Cyber Command (ARCYBER).

AMARS today supports activities of many types. Activities may include DoD directed international Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) activities, supporting National Guard training and operations or supporting Federal Government agencies. These activities supplement MARS's primary function to provide contingency communications support to the DoD, the combatant commands and their components.

The 21St CENTURY Army MARS Volunteer

Individual citizen volunteers located in communities throughout the United States operating their radio stations on the same net with military and government stations makes MARS unique and distinctive. It is a special kind of citizen that does this.

Individual Member volunteers in AMARS are expected to take the initiative in expanding their existing foundation in electronics and radio communications through independent study in the areas of communications technology. MARS volunteers improve their Amateur Radio station for operation on all frequencies between 2-30 MHz and utilize technology that is not normally used in Amateur Radio.

In 1925 when the Army Amateur Radio Service (AARS) was established, radio was a new technology and an understanding of radio was enough for citizen volunteers to be of value to military and government operations. In the 90 years since the AARS was founded, the requirement has evolved as radio and cyberspace have merged into a single telecommunications medium. The 21st century brings new challenges to Army MARS and its volunteer corps. Radio is only a small component of the larger cyber concept of operations. The modern MARS member must be an expert in RF communications, its associated equipment, and Information Technology.
The 21st Century MARS member is expected to mitigate risk in cyberspace, maintain operational and cyber security, recover quickly from a cyber incident, utilize different types of encryption tools, as well as establish reliable, interoperable communications links using HF radio when access to cyberspace is impaired or denied.