

WELCOME TO THE UTAH CODE NET

All Utah amateurs are invited to check in to the Utah Code Net (UCN), which meets nightly at 7:30 pm local time on 3570 KHz. Although quite a few old timers check into the UCN, all hams - in particular, hams learning Morse Code -- are welcome to join in. The Net Control Station (NCS) calls the net at about 12 wpm, and will match your code speed if it happens to be slower.

Here's how the net works: At 7:30, the NCS (a different station is NCS each night of the week) opens the net, and asks for the representative TO TWN to check in. This station will QNI (check in), and tell the NCS if he has traffic for the UCN or not. TWN is the next higher net in the National Traffic System, and provides a way for UCN members to clear traffic to locations outside of Utah. After the TO TWN station has checked in, the NCS asks for other checkins. There is no particular order of checkins at this point, although newcomers to the net may want to wait 5 minutes or so until the rush of stations with traffic has passed. As stations check in with traffic, the NCS will ask them to go to an alternate frequency to pass their traffic to other appropriate stations. Occasionally traffic will be cleared on frequency, which gives the newcomer a good opportunity to hear how the traffic is actually sent -- and received. At the end of the net, stations are excused by the NCS and, after all the traffic has been cleared that can be, the NCS will close the net (QNF).

The preceding discussion brings up several questions from the newcomers. Here's some common questions, and their answers:

Q. How and when can I check in to the net?

A. The NCS will invite you to do so, but you have to listen carefully. He will probably say...

UCN DE NA7G QNI K

or, after another station has just checked in...

NEXT K

This is the time to jump in! You can just start sending, such as...

DE N7AW QRU K

or, if several stations are trying to get the attention of the NCS, just send a letter of the alphabet, such as a letter in your suffix...

W

The NCS, if he picks you, will send the same letter...

W

That's your clue! Now you can check in. If you don't have traffic, send...

DE N7AW QRU K

If you do have traffic, be sure to list it when you check in...

DE N7AW QTC LOGAN 1 K

That tells the NCS that you have one piece of traffic for Logan. The NCS will then tell you to stand by until he can figure out if he can find an outlet for your traffic....

R N7AW DE NA7G GE AS

Later, he may call you and ask for your name and QTH.

Q. What do I do if the NCS asks me to change frequency to send traffic?

A. The NCS, in asking you to change frequency, will say...

AW

You can respond with the CW abbreviation for yes...

C

You could also use a dash, or "HR" (here) -- anything to let the NCS know you're there and listening. Then the NCS will call the other station in the same manner. The NCS will then say something like...

DN 5 UR LOGAN 1 K

The NCS has asked you to go down 5 KHz (3570 - 5= 3565) and send your traffic to the other station. If you understand, you can respond with a...

G

Which tells the NCS you got the info and are moving. The other station should do likewise.

When passing traffic, it is customary that the station receiving the traffic will call the sending station and tell him that he is ready to receive the message (QRV)...

N7AW DE KA7LJY QRV UR LOGAN K

That tells you the receiving station is ready for the traffic. You send...

DE N7AW HR NR (continue with the message)

After passing the traffic and getting a confirmation (QSL), wait a moment before returning to net frequency. This will give any other stations that have traffic for you a chance to call you, if there are any.

When returning to net frequency, wait for a pause in activity, and send...

AW

The NCS will respond, asking you to stand by...

AW AS

Q. How do I send a CW message?

A. Easy. In fact, no punctuation is used in the message at all. The following example is a message from Julie in Farmington, going to a friend in Logan:

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NR 21 R N7AW 15 FARMINGTON UT MAR 4
SUZY FOX AA
120 EAST 400 SOUTH AA
LOGAN UT 84123 AA
TEL 555 1234 BT
WILL YOU BE COMING TO
VISIT OVER SPRING BREAK QUERY
PLEASE ADVISE X TAKE CARE BT
JULIE AR N
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Q. Do I list all traffic according to the city it is going to?

A. Within Utah, that's right. If the traffic is to go out of our Section (Utah), however, it should be listed as TWN traffic. The TO TWN station will then pick it up from you, and then he

will retransmit it on the Twelfth Region Net later in the evening, or on the Beehive Utah Net the next day.

Q. What if I do something wrong when I check in or make a lot of errors?

A. No problem. The UCN is a training net, and the experienced ops are there to help you. If you have any questions, just ask. As for errors, correct them and keep going. Speed is not a criteria for checking in! Go at a speed that is comfortable for you, and concentrate on proper spacing and character formation.

The UCN Manager publishes a bulletin for the member stations periodically. It contains items of general interest, and lists the current members, the Duty Roster, and other net information.

Several operating aids are available from the ARRL, and will increase your enjoyment of the net (these are also available at www.beehiveutahnet.com):

FSD 218 Message format, precedences, handling instructions, Q and QN signals, prosigns

FSD 3 ARL Numbered Radiogram Texts

Public Service Communications Manual

That's about all the information you need to start checking into the UCN. Listen to others check in before you try, and you will quickly get a feel for how the net operates. We hope that you check in often. Traffic people are among the best operators on the air, and the CW ops are the cream of the crop! I'm sure you will find the UCN rewarding as well as fun.

73,

Jim Brown, NA7G
Utah Code Net Manager