

About the Maritime Mobile Service Network

<https://mmsn.org/>

The Maritime Mobile Service Network (MMSN) was launched on January 3, 1968, by Winston Robertson (the Chaplain) KB5YX, formerly WB4AKB, Steve Rock N4SR, formerly WA4YVQ, Don Van Horn K1FZY, formerly WA4TPW, Mel White WA4IQS, D. Freeman K1YLI, J.G. Kincade WA4YVX, Art Werner K3QYQ, H. Bretches K4DBR, L.B. Lapman W4SAW, and G.W. Powell WA4RRO. Back in those days, US naval vessels were not allowed to have a MARS station onboard. To get around this, this group of shore-side hams dedicated themselves to running phone patches for the naval vessels in the ham bands, primarily 20-meters.

The original operating frequency chosen was 14.320 MHz but the net had to move to 14.317 MHz a few weeks later to avoid excessive interference. In 1969, when the net moved to 14.313 MHz, it also established 14.300 MHz as an alternate working frequency and for years operated on either frequency depending on nearby interference, but, since before 2000, the net has been operating exclusively on 14.300 MHz.

The original purpose of the MMSN was to "*Serve Those Who Serve*" in the United States military during the Vietnam crisis. Since that time, the network has grown considerably in hours of operation and services provided and consists of a dedicated group of Radio Amateurs who unselfishly volunteer their time, equipment, and efforts to serve and assist those in need of communications from foreign countries and the high seas. Our primary purpose now is that of handling legal third party traffic from maritime mobiles, both pleasure, and commercial and overseas-deployed military personnel. We also help missionaries in foreign countries, and volunteer net control stations from throughout North America and the Caribbean maintain the network. Furthermore, these stations are assisted by relay stations to ensure total coverage of the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean & Caribbean Seas, and the eastern Pacific Ocean. The network, in particular, has been formally recognized for its work with emergency traffic by the Dept. of Homeland Security, the United States Coast Guard, and the National Weather Service, to mention a few.

The network acts as a weather beacon for ships during periods of severe weather and regularly repeats high seas and tropical weather warnings and bulletins from the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center.

The Maritime Mobile Service Net is operational every day from 12:00pm until 10:00pm Eastern Time, on the 20-meter *Global Emergency Center Of Activity frequency of 14.300 MHz as outlined by the International Radio Union.

All amateur radio operators are invited to participate simply by checking in. If you have a phone

patch at your station, please tell the net control station and he/she will certainly try to put you to work!

* At the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 1 meeting in 2005, it was decided that certain frequencies on certain amateur bands would be designated as "Global Emergency Center Of Activity" (GECO) frequencies. The purpose of establishing the GECO frequencies was to designate a place for passing emergency traffic on amateur frequencies, should the need arise. Over the next few years, Regions 2 and 3 followed suit in making the following frequencies world-wide GECO frequencies. Those frequencies are: 21.360 MHz, 18.160 MHz, 14.300 MHz, 7.240 MHz, 7.060 MHz, 3.985 MHz, and 3.750 MHz. These and other frequencies, with their band plans, can also be viewed at www.iaru-r2.org/band-plan.