



Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 4650.2
January 26, 1998

ASD(C31)

SUBJECT: Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS)

References: (a) DoD Directive 4650.2, subject as above, January 17, 1986 (hereby canceled)

(b) DoD Directive 5410.18, "Community Relations," July 3, 1974

(c) DoD 4160.21-M, "Defense Reutilization and Marketing Manual,"
March 1990, authorized by DoD Directive 4140.1, January 4, 1993

1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive reissues reference (a) to update policy, responsibilities, membership and requirements of the MARS.

2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff~ the Combatant Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities.

3. POLICY

It is DoD policy to:

3.1. Support the MARS mission to provide emergency communications on a local, national, or international basis as an alternate communications capability.

3.2. Support and encourage the MARS and amateur radio activities and avoid,

within the limitations imposed by military exigencies, any action that would tend to jeopardize the independent prerogatives of the individual amateur radio operator.

3.3. Recognize the military affiliation of the services provided by MARS volunteers when operating in an official MARS capacity.

3.4. Encourage and cooperate with amateur and private communications activities to enhance their military and civil value.

3.5. Maintain liaison with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), major U. S. amateur radio organizations, and other volunteer emergency radio services.

3.6. Encourage inter-Service operation of MARS stations on a regular basis.

3.7. Support the MARS program's affiliation with appropriate Executive Agencies of the Federal Government.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence shall provide overall policy guidance and advice to the Military Departments in matters relating to the administration and operations of their MARS programs, and shall be responsible for emergency communications initiatives with appropriate Federal Agencies, including the Office of the Manager, National Communications System (NCS), with regard to national security and emergency preparedness activities, and the civil volunteer communications community.

4.2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

4.2.1. Establish and organize a MARS entity within each of the Military Departments.

4.2.2. Manage, administer, fund and operate the MARS programs, including acquisition, storage, distribution and accounting for equipment.

4.2.3. Ensure that MARS entities coordinate activities to avoid unnecessary duplication between Military Departments.

4.2.4. Appoint a MARS Chief, whose responsibilities shall be to:

4.2.4.1. Provide MARS support for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff wartime communications as identified in Appendix C of the National Military Command System - DoD Emergency Communications Plan.

4.2.4.2. Provide support to the NCS-Shared Resources high frequencies (HF) program in support of national security and emergency preparedness activities.

4.2.4.3. Assist in effecting normal communications supporting military, civil, and/or disaster officials during periods of emergency.

4.2.4.4. Handle quasi-official, official, and morale voice, data, and message communications traffic for the Armed Forces and authorized U. S. Government civilian personnel stationed throughout the world. As appropriate, establish MARS stations during contingency military operations throughout the world to support morale and welfare traffic.

4.2.4.5. Establish programs to create civilian interest, recruit qualified volunteers, and furnish appropriate training in military communications equipment, techniques, and procedures.

4.2.4.6. Initiate efforts to attain improvement in radio operating techniques and state-of-the-art technology through experimentation and testing.

4.2.4.7. Conduct an appropriate amateur radio program as a part of the annual celebration of Armed Forces Day, in accordance with DoD Directive 5410.18 (reference (b)).

4.2.4.8. Convene a conference biannually; the chair shall rotate among the three MARS chiefs each calendar year.

4.2.4.9. Review current, and devise new, standards for the operational readiness of the MARS capability.

4.2.4.10. Develop, coordinate and disseminate procedures concerning administration, operations, and training for respective MARS and amateur radio programs.

4.2.4.11. Have the prerogative to integrate very high frequencies (VHF) capability into their service MARS on a discretionary basis.

4.2.12. Routinely plan, together with service operations personnel, specific communications missions for MARS and provide MARS with actual traffic for relay

between military operations for process evaluation.

4.3. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology shall ensure that the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Logistics) provides overall policy guidance and advice on matters relating to the management and standardization of the MARS supply and equipment program as prescribed in DoD 4160.21 -M (reference (c)).

5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.

/s/

John J. Hamre
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures - 1

1. MARS

El. ENCLOSURE 1

MILITARY AFFILIATE RADIO SYSTEM (MARS)

El.1. Membership

El. 1.1. MARS shall be composed of assigned and volunteer personnel as follows:

El. 1.1.1. Military Stations. A station under the auspices of a military command and/or activity, either within the continental United States or overseas, operated and maintained by military and/or civilian personnel.

El. 1.1.2. Club Stations. Established, operated, and maintained by volunteers under the auspices of a properly constituted military and/or civilian amateur radio club. The MARS call sign for the station will be issued as an additional license to the club member serving as the club station trustee.

El. 1.1.3. Individual Stations. Operated and maintained by military and civilian volunteers who possess a radio station capable of operating on assigned MARS HF and, as permitted by individual service MARS Chief, VHF.

El.2. Requirements

El.2.1. All applicants for individual MARS membership or MARS operating privileges at military or club stations must be at least 17 years old, citizens of the United States, or have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence and must possess a valid amateur radio operators license issued by the FCC.

El.2.2. Unless a person is excused by the proper authority, the minimum participation requirements to retain membership in a Service MARS program shall include at least 6 hours of on-the-air operating time, per calendar quarter.

El.2.3. Military Affiliate Radio Stations, whether military, club, or individual stations, may be a member of only one MARS Service. Military commands and/or activities shall affiliate with their sponsoring Service MARS, unless operating in areas where there is only one MARS Service authorized.