

Central UP Rally 2026

Radio Operator Handbook

This document is a guide for the amateur radio operators who will be operating on the directed network supporting the **Central UP Rally**. To help the net run smoothly, please try to follow the procedures outlined below as closely as possible. They are a little different than the procedures used in other rallies, but they are consistent with those used in other directed nets with good results. Some instructions may seem a bit stilted, but it is important to conform to the protocol detailed below; communications will be quick and easy if we all use the same procedures and terminology.

Purpose of this Net

The primary purpose of this net is ensuring the safety of drivers, workers, and spectators.

Providing rally officials with information to help conduct the event is an important secondary consideration.

General Procedures

1. This is a directed net; all calls will be made through net control. If you wish to talk to another station on the net, you can call them *only after calling net control and getting permission!*
2. Before transmitting, make sure that the frequency is not in use, and that net control isn't waiting for a response from someone. You must listen. Net control will finish its messages with its call sign. When you hear the net control operator give his call (e.g. "this is KB8PLR") you know that it is OK to call net control.
3. Use your tactical call sign to get the attention of net control. Since all calls will be for net control saying "This is Three Start" alerts the control operator that the operator at three start wants to get on the net. It isn't necessary to say "net control, this is three start" since you won't be calling anyone but net control. If the net is busy, net control's response may not be immediate.
4. Use your call sign only at the end of your last transmission (of a series); when the net control operator hears you say "your call sign" they will assume that you have finished your business.
5. All radio operators must listen to the net. Even if the stage captain asks you to do something else, remember that your first priority is "reading the mail" on the net, and that you must be able to hear and respond to the net at all times. If you haven't heard net traffic for a while assume you are having a problem & check in.
6. Unless you have emergency traffic, allow a small amount of time to lapse between the end of the net control ID and your call to net control. This will provide a window for emergency callers to get to the front of the queue.

Frequencies

There rally will use a primary repeater and two simplex frequencies which should be programmed into your radio for quick and easy access.

Saturday Primary Repeater **KC8VC (Iron Mountain) **146.850- pl110.9**
Simplex Frequency **146.850** (Secondary Simplex Frequency **146.500**)**

CUPRally strongly discourages the use of cross band repeaters during the course of the event. The inherent delay in linking the two radios usually results in someone getting stepped on, there may be several radio operators trying to call a message into Net Control during peak times.

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Emergency procedure

If you have emergency traffic, interrupt the net at any time by saying “break”. This must only be done for true emergencies — something that threatens the health and welfare of people. Other traffic will be kept to a minimum, or suspended if necessary, during an emergency.

Do NOT broadcast details of an emergency event but do try to obtain and relay to net control the following information:

- Are there emergency services required (ie medical, fire or law enforcement)
- Location – how far from the start (and instruction number, if possible)
- Vehicle number-- obtain but do not broadcast until asked for.
- Approximate time?

Checking into/out of the net

Net should be informed when you leave “home” for your post, and when you arrive back “home.” When you leave for your post, check in, using the tactical call of your first assignment. If you are changing from one assignment to another, check out using the first tactical and check back in using the tactical call of your next assignment when you are ready to resume monitoring the net. Once you have checked in, it is assumed that you are monitoring the net. Check out at the end of your assigned duties and let Net know if you’re available for more.

Log Sheets

Radio operators are also asked to record the vehicle number of competitors which start, finish, or pass by them. Please record the information on the log sheet provided when possible. At a minimum try to keep an accurate count. Net will ask for car numbers when needed.

What Net Control Needs to Know

The following events should be reported to net control:

- arrival at your pick-up point
- departure from Pick-up point with stage crew
- when you are in place and ready
- arrival of the Medical team (start & spectator)
- arrival of first rally competitor vehicle
- arrival of the sweep vehicles at start of stage
- time that sweep vehicles start sweeping a stage
- arrival of the last competitor at start & finish control
- time that a stage is swept
- when the stage is cleared, and all marshals are picked up

There are other items that may have to be reported to net control, but the above items should **always** be reported when they occur.

Things Net Control Must OK

These events must be cleared with the net control operator **before** they happen:

- departure of car 0 from a stage start
- **departure of the first rally vehicle from a stage start**
- departure of sweep vehicles to sweep a stage
- shutdown of a stage