

Intercontinental Amateur Traffic Net (Intercon)

Operation Handbook

©2026 All Rights Reserved. No part of this Handbook may be reproduced for anyone other than Intercon Members.

Published 06/01/2026 for the Intercontinental Amateur Traffic Net Operators

This handbook was developed to offer an insight of how the Net Watch logger for Intercon works. It includes basic radio operation and etiquette along with procedures specifically used with this Net. It will also include specific information to familiarize you with the logger that is shared with us from MMSN. All this, to make you the best operator on the air!

Should you find any contents that need to be revised, corrected or possibly revisited, to update it to current conditions, please contact the Net Manager with your comments.

Intercon appreciates your time to become familiar with our Net and to the way it is operated.


SECTION A - The “Net Watch” Logging Program

The Intercon Logger program is shared with us by the Maritime Mobile Service Net (MMSN). We are guests on the logger so please log out at 12 noon every day unless you are an authorized MMSN NCS Operator. It is expected that you will do your utmost to enter accurate information at all times when you are the Net Control Station Operator.

In the following paragraphs, will follow intricate details about the logger and how it works. We will take each field and/or feature, and explain the use and necessary information is should contain.

To Begin: Logging In

If you do not have log in credentials, please ask the Net Manager for authority to gain access. When you obtain the logger URL, simply use the REGISTER link on the lower right to request access. Someone will respond to your request shortly to approve you.

When you first log in everyday, please **UNMUTE THE CHAT Bell**. It is this  ICON in the upper left. Just click on it to unmute the Bell. Unfortunately, at this time, the logger begins with the CHAT Bell muted. It is important for you to UNMUTE the Chat bell so you will be notified of a new chat message. You may not notice that someone is trying to communicate with you on the Chat during your shift. **This is important for you to unmute it each time you log on.**

If you have never used this logging program before, you should spend the time to monitor the current Net Control Station Operator to watch, in real time, what happens. Listen to the current NCS Operator and then see the results. It may take some time for you to follow what is happening. Then apply what you have learned during your first session as the Net Control Operator. In most instances, someone will mentor you and follow along until you are familiar with the logger.

The best way to understand the following explanation of the fields, is to view the NW Logger main page and view the fields as referenced below. The fields are not offered in any particular order. If you don't understand the explanation or description, please contact any Net Manger for help.

45 **Chat Function**

46 The Chat Function, the left window of the logger is a very important useful tool. This is where you can
47 communicate in real time with anyone else logged in.
48

49 Chat allows you to send text messages along with some emojis that are available. It should be limited to
50 communicating with the current NCS Operator or others seeking to help you, such as, giving you a call sign
51 that you can't quite hear on the air. Or perhaps the next NCS Operator will let you know they are ready to take
52 the Net over when you are done because they may not hear you on the air. It allows for a smooth transition
53 from one operator to another.
54

55 Please be sure to respond to any messages that are directed at you so the sender knows you got the message.
56 This is particularly important during shift transition so the person handing you the net knows you have it.
57

58 Note that the Chat window has some history and you can display a certain number of past messages, in reverse
59 order, that were typed in. Also notice that each message is prefaced with the sender's call sign so you know
60 who sent the message. When sending a message, your call sign will precede the message you are sending.
61

62 **UPPER RIGHT CORNER: Users On Line: "1" Box** (or will show the total number of users logged in)

63 This field displays current Intercon or MMSN members (and number) who are logged into the program. If the
64 logger sees a valid user listed in its private schedule and it matches the time slot, that user will have a red
65 highlight to indicate they are the current Net Control Station Operator.
66

67 NOTE: If you are covering for another NCS, you will not appear with the red highlight. Also, the logger has
68 some issues with displaying certain stations logged in from time to time. Seems to be a bug in the program.
69

70 **Search Field**

71 The Search Field is the most often used field as it allows you to enter a call sign for you to search the NW
72 logger data base. Note that the logger program has no filters at this time, so it is possible to enter non-standard
73 letters and numbers of any sort. That is not to say that you should do that, but **you may enter partial call
74 signs to do a search, in case you could not hear the entire correct call sign.** If the information you enter is
75 found in the data base, only one result will be displayed in the CALL SIGN- NAME- LOCATION fields
76 below the Search field.
77

78 If no data is displayed, either the person has not checked in before, or you entered the call sign incorrectly.

79 **Note that "0" (zero) and the letter "O" look similar, but are not the same, and will produce different
80 results.** If you notice the SEARCH RESULTS window (Search Data Window), there may be a suggested
81 closest match. This data is only a suggestion from the search and not an absolute perfect match. If it finds data,
82 it will be the last match found against your search data. This is a handy feature when there is a lot of noise on the
83 air and you are having difficulty understanding the complete call sign of the person calling. Unfortunately, not
84 all results are offered.
85

86 If you get a successful match, ALWAYS confirm that the call sign is correct and it is the person you are talking
87 to. It may also be a good idea to confirm the name and location, as sometimes people move and don't let us
88 know. It is up to you to maintain timely and correct data in the logger. If you know that information needs to
89 be updated, please do so before submitting the entry. These fields should always reflect their REAL

90 information as seen in the FCC or QRZ data base. You can enter other pertinent information in other fields that
91 will be explained later.

92
93 If the caller is a first time check in, please use either the QRZ or FCC link in the lower right corner for a new
94 window to pop up and display their information. This makes it easy to simply copy and paste their information
95 into the appropriate fields into the logger. You will notice that the fields are already populated with your search
96 call sign that you entered. Also, try to confirm they hold a General or Extra Class License.

97
98 Only enter their real call sign into the CALL SIGN field, their first name into the NAME field (and not pet or
99 spouse's name), and the town and state (or country) into the Location field. No other information should be in
100 these fields. If you have the time, please enter "NEW" or something similar to indicate it is their first time
101 checking into the COMMENTS field.

102
103 Once you are confident the information you pasted and/or typed in is correct, hit the SUBMIT button, and you
104 will see their information pop up in the list of recent check ins. If something is incorrect, use the EDIT button
105 to make changes, which is explained later in this document.

106 107 **Call Signs Field**

108 This field will be automatically populated when a successful search finds it in the data base. It will be blank
109 (along with the NAME and LOCATION fields) if there is no match.

110
111 If the person has never checked in to the net (or MMSN), you will have to enter the correct information.
112 Simply click the QRZ and/or FCC quick look up (in the lower right corner) to get a pop-up window. If there
113 are no results found, you may have entered the call sign wrong. Confirm the call sign. Remember a zero is not
114 the letter "O" and vice versa.

115
116 When you are able to confirm the information, you can copy and paste (or type in) the Call Sign, Name,
117 Location (town and state only) into the appropriate fields. Only submit the entry when you are sure it is
118 accurate by confirming it with the contact. Remember: All entries are tagged with your call sign, so we know
119 who made the entry. If you have the time, also confirm that the new check in holds a General or Extra Class
120 license.

121 122 ***Notes about special situations:***

123 Do not enter **Special Event Station call signs!** They change owners occasionally, so it is useless to enter those
124 into the logger. Use the caller's personal call sign, then enter the Special Event Call sign into the comments
125 section for this one entry and any other information you find pertinent.

126
127 Club call signs: You may enter club call signs, but please, in the comments, enter the name and personal call
128 sign of the person making contact. If the name of the club is very long, abbreviate it and put the entire proper
129 name of the club into the NCS DATA ONLY field so others can see it when they check in next time.

130
131 If a Technician Class license holder tries to check in, advise them to stop transmitting as they do not have
132 privileges on 20 meters. You may log them, but please enter a CAUTION message in the NCS DATA Only
133 field that they are a technician class only.

134

135 **DATE/UTC Field**

136 Date and UTC time fields are automatically populated when you do any search. Change the time only if it is
137 not correct, such as when beginning your slot, the time should be the time you took over the net, **NOT the**
138 **time you did the search! And please note, that the time requires the “00:00” colon sign** between the hours
139 and minutes to be valid.

141 **STATUS Drop Down Menu**

142 The Status field is a drop-down menu. Please choose the most accurate type of check in: mobile, portable,
143 maritime, etc. It is self-explanatory, but many operators forget to change this for each check in.

145 **Comments Field**

146 The Comments Field allows you to enter any comments about this contact, for this one-time entry only. Some
147 suggestions follow: their real location at the moment if operating in a mobile, remotely, or from some other
148 location than their home. Or perhaps they are QRP, or some other interesting information just for this one
149 entry. Please keep it short and to the point and meaningful should this information be viewed in the future by
150 another operator.

151
152 If someone relayed the current contact to you, please add “via (Call Sign)” or something similar to
153 acknowledge the relay from the source station. Or if it is a 1st time check in, “New” would be appropriate.

155 **NCS Data Only Comments Field**

156 The NCS Data Only Comments Field allows you to semi-permanently enter more information about this
157 contact such as personal history, radio/antenna information, additional information about their location (near
158 another large city or landmark), or perhaps how to pronounce their name or location. If their nickname in the
159 Name field varies considerably from their real name, it would be prudent to enter their real name here. This is
160 very helpful for future operators who may check in this station. Any data in this field will appear every time
161 you search this call sign, so you may want to look at this information, if populated for every check in.

162
163 Note that this information shows up each time you search for this call sign. **HOWEVER**, it may be changed by
164 you while viewing it, before you hit the Submit button. Never delete anything unless you know it is false or
165 inaccurate. Entering information about their current or past status about work, military history, or personal
166 history is acceptable as long as it is volunteered by the check in.

167
168 **CAREFUL**: Some previous operators entered information that they wish to remain permanently in the record
169 for this field. If you change it, either intentionally or by mistake, you may be contacted as to why you changed
170 it. Exercise some discretion and common sense in regard to the use of this field. All entries are tagged with
171 your call sign so we know who changed it! But date of births (DOB) should be removed if shown.

173 **NO PII!**

174 At no time should you collect Personally Identifiable Information from anyone, particularly Dates of Birth or
175 Social Security Numbers. This kind of information can be used to steal their identity. If you see such
176 information already listed, please delete it before submitting the check in.

177

178 Other information, such as phone numbers, addresses, or boat information, should only be entered if the check
179 in tells you to or is offered in the course of the contact.

181 **Vessel Name; Type; Description; POB; Position Fields**

182 These fields are pretty much self-explanatory. Do the best you can to enter precise information about any
183 vessel that is checking in. Ask questions if the information is not provided. The Type of vessel can be chosen
184 from the drop-down menu.

186 Position information should be Latitude and Longitude whenever possible. Or you may enter other
187 information as supplied by the boater. Additionally, present speed, heading, and ETA to a destination would be
188 great. If the vessel is moored, the location of the dock would be a good idea to enter, or if it is under anchor.

190 **LOWER RIGHT CORNER: Seven Pre-populated Fields**

191 When you do a search, these fields are automatically populated if previous data is found.

193 QRZ Look up: If you click this button, a pop-up page from QRZ.com will appear with the current search
194 results. It may or may not display a search of the call sign, provided it is valid. If nothing shows up, you may
195 have entered a false or incorrect call sign. Or you can close the window and try the next field. The website
196 may be down or the operator may have asked QRZ not to publish their information.

198 FCC Look up: Click this button for a search of the FCC ULS Database of this call sign. Again, if it is valid,
199 information should be displayed from the search you performed. If not, it does not exist then the contact may
200 be fraudulent. Please confirm all call signs and then search again.

202 Ship Trak: Clicking here will bring up any vessel ship tracking information for this call sign.

204 NW Look up: This will perform a search of all previous entries that appear in the database.

206 (Your Call Sign) Log: Search for any database entries that you entered that match this call sign you just
207 searched.

209 Net Watch DB: Clicking here gives you an opportunity to search for any database entries.

211 WX Data: Clicking here will try to search Weather data for the location that is populated from the database
212 field for that call sign. If nothing is displayed, there was no match or invalid match. This is a handy tool if the
213 station requests weather for their listed location.

215 **Traffic Area Field**

216 This area of the logger is for IMPORTANT information only that you think all NCS Operators should have. To
217 enter a message, click on the POST button. To view messages, click the SHOW TRAFFIC button. Only the
218 poster can delete it.

220 Typically, you should not use this feature unless you intend on deleting the information within two weeks. Too
221 many Operators list things here of no importance, and then forget to delete it. Very annoying to see the same
222 post every time you log on.

223 Intercon Operators are discouraged from using this field except when you have very important information
224 that you think every NCS Operator, both Intercon and MMSN should read, such as alerts, BOLO's, or missed
225 communications that may have been important. THEN, remember to delete it when the information becomes
226 old or outdated. In any event, please delete it within two weeks of listing.
227

228 Bottom-EDIT Database; RESET Command Buttons

230 If you hit the EDIT Button on the bottom of the screen you will be presented with a list of the recent check-ins
231 by call sign. CAUTION! Choosing a call sign here to edit must be used with caution. Only edit information
232 that is in error. If you are trying to remove a blank entry, there is no call sign listed but the EDIT link is
233 clickable to remove that entry. To remove a blank entry, just remove all the data in all the fields, and hit
234 ENTER. The blank entry is then removed from the list.
235

236 Hitting the RESET Button will clear your entry screen.
237

238 **SECTION B: Intercon Operational Procedures (as posted to the Internet page:** 239 **<http://interconnet.us/procedures>**)

241 This page is updated regularly to reflect any important operational additions or changes. Please visit the site at
242 least every month to refresh your memory and note any changes. You are expected to abide by and perform
243 your duties to the best of your ability during your shift. Some information may be duplicated there.
244

245 **SECTION C: Generally Accepted Technical Operating Procedures and Hints.**

247 **Preparing for your Shift with Intercon**

248 It is highly recommended that you test all aspects of your radio equipment well before you are scheduled for
249 your on-air shift as the Net Control Station Operator.
250

251 **NEVER Tune up on the frequency we are using!** Go up or down at least 3 khz. to perform your tuning
252 ritual. It is unacceptable to tune up on an active frequency. Please avoid it at all costs.
253

254 You should also regularly check your audio by using the feedback option in your radio, or even better, use
255 <http://websdr.org> to hear yourself as others will hear you. Try to keep at least 3 inches away from your
256 microphone to avoid "blowing" into the mic. Use your audio meter to make sure you are not overmodulating
257 and perhaps turning on your compression to avoid that also. Be sure to make any necessary adjustments on an
258 open unused frequency. You might want to ask anyone on the air how your audio sounds to them before your
259 shift.
260

261 **Starting your shift**

262 Please check in the with current NCS Operator at least 5 minutes before the start of your shift, either on the air
263 or with the CHAT feature on the logger. The earlier the better. Current NCS Operators should always check
264 the online schedule to see who is expected to relieve them.
265

266 Be sure to "search yourself" on the logger and to make your status "Current Intercon NCS" from the drop-
267 down menu when taking over the Net. The first entry should be you! Also, change the time (Keeping this
268 format: 00:00) to the actual time you took over the net. Hit the SUBMIT button only after the net has been
269 handed to you. BE PATIENT! The previous NCS may be in a QSO and trying to finish the logger before
270 handing it over to you. Never "take" the Net, it should be given to you by the previous NCS Operator.
271

272 **During your shift**

273 When conversing with others on the air, be sure to wait to respond until you hear them say, “over,” or stop
274 transmitting for at least 3 seconds. Many operators jump in too soon and double with the contacted station
275 especially in high noise times.
276

277 Please avoid “BLANK” entries into the logger. This happens sometimes when the Logger Server is slow to
278 respond and you hit the SUBMIT button more than once. Please be patient after you hit the SUBMIT button
279 and wait for it to respond. Lines that show up with no information in the list, can be deleted by hitting the
280 EDIT button. Clearing out all the data in all the fields, and then submitting the change will delete it from the
281 list. BE CAREFUL what you do when using the EDIT function!
282

283 **Providing Relays to the current NCS Operator.**

284 You may relay a station to the current NCS Operator, but be sure to use the phrase, “RELAY, (Your Call
285 Sign). Only repeat what the other station says, do not act as the NCS! Relays are just repeating what the
286 station says and what the NCS says to the relay. Getting into a conversation with the relay is not appropriate or
287 recommended unless the current NCS Operator wants you to.
288

289 Alternately, just use the CHAT function to enter the call sign if the current NCS Operator is having difficulty
290 understanding the complete call sign. Always let the current NCS Operator handle all communications directly
291 when appropriate.
292

293 **Relay Buddy Program**

294 Helping one another, if you have the time, is a great way to assist the current NCS Operator in hearing stations
295 that are trying to check in, especially during challenging band conditions. Not all of us can hear all stations
296 around the hemisphere all the time because of this.
297

298 Simply let the current NCS Operator know that you will be their “Relay Buddy” over the CHAT function for a
299 specific time period, and will attempt to assist them with any check ins that may not be heard by them.

300 This can also be a valuable tool if the NCS Operator has lost their Internet connection, or has some other issue
301 with entering check ins. With their permission, you may enter the check ins while confirming them with the
302 current NCS Operator until they have Internet service restored.
303

304 In dire situations, the Current NCS Operator may want to transfer the Net to you to take over in case of
305 equipment or other failures. Please let them know if you can take the Net, or attempt to find another
306 authorized NCS Operator to take it.
307

308 Please remember to sign off with your call sign when you have completed your shift!

309

310

-----END of Document Contents. Written by Holger Skurbe, K2HES © Copyright 2026 All rights reserved.-----