

AI-03737 AMARS Training Roadmap

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AMARS Training Roadmap for Retired Operators

This roadmap is designed for retired U.S. citizens with amateur radio licenses who want to pursue Army MARS (AMARS) training and skills as a fulfilling hobby, even while residing abroad.

Phase 1: Foundation Skills

- **Radio Familiarization:** Review HF transceiver operation, antenna basics, and power management.
- **Message Handling:** Practice structured message formats (radiograms, SITREPs) using amateur bands.
- **Net Discipline:** Join local ham nets in Cebu to practice check-ins, brevity, and procedure.

Phase 2: MARS-Specific Knowledge

- **Frequency Awareness:** Study MARS-assigned HF ranges (outside amateur bands).
- **Digital Tools:** Learn Winlink, ALE (Automatic Link Establishment), and secure messaging protocols.

- **Traffic Handling:** Practice relaying messages accurately, simulating DoD-style traffic.
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Phase 3: Emergency Communications

- **Scenario Drills:** Simulate loss of internet/phone service; pass traffic via HF.
 - **Power Resilience:** Build backup systems (solar, battery banks, generators).
 - **Community Integration:** Coordinate with local ham clubs (e.g., PARA, Cebu Amateur Radio Club) for disaster nets.
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Phase 4: Advanced Operations

- **Propagation Studies:** Track solar cycles, band conditions, and HF reach.
 - **Field Deployments:** Practice portable operations with lightweight antennas and off-grid power.
 - **Interoperability:** Learn how MARS integrates with amateur emergency services and government agencies.
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Phase 5: Ongoing Development

- **Regular Nets:** Participate in MARS nets when in the U.S. or authorized locations.
 - **Online Training:** Engage with MARS HQ resources, manuals, and exercises remotely.
 - **Mentorship:** Share skills with local ham operators, fostering community resilience.
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Key Takeaways

- You can remain a MARS member abroad, but transmit only when authorized.
- Skills gained in MARS training overlap strongly with amateur emergency communications.

- Combining MARS discipline with local ham practice ensures readiness both legally and practically.
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Next Step: Contact Army MARS HQ for membership guidance, and join a Cebu ham club to begin practicing structured nets and emergency drills.