



NOTICE: To All Sunday Net Control Operators and DARC Club Members:

On Sunday January 24th we had some regular Echo Link clients that could not hear our Sunday evening net while it was in progress. Because they could hear no activity they began a conversation on Echo Link that was still associated with our repeater system.

This caused confusion with operators trying to relay in or acknowledge their checkins and later caused enough QRM to the net that Walt KA7STK finally turned the link off.

I have tried to piece together what is happening and why. Here is at least a partial explanation that may contain a few loopholes but it is in progress and we can all learn from this experience.

The reasons for this problem are two-fold. One is the long squelch tail now being used on all of the link radios. Bill Wells will be doing some research to see if we can shorten this squelch tail at all with our existing system configuration.

If any operator talks before the squelch tail drops from the previous transmission then Echo Link sees this as a continuous information packet that can build until the squelch finally drops or system timeout and sends that transmission packet out on Echo Link. In the mean time Echo Link users would probably hear **no** activity.

The other factor I'm told is the response time for each associated link radio in our system is 500 milliseconds. Since there are four units associated in our DARC Radio System (three repeaters and one control unit) it takes a total of **2 seconds** to both initiate a transmission on all three machines and two seconds to drop back out. (Four seconds total!)

There are several ways we can deal with this to expedite the net and avoid confusion. First would be to have each Sunday's Net Control operator call for Echo Link members at the beginning of the net and simultaneously announce that we will collect Echo Link members at the beginning and end of roll instead of when they actually appear within the role. Also to advise Echo Link users not to call in during the net until they are summoned. Further a net operator may hear an Echo Link announcement of a station connecting and take that opportunity to acknowledge them or advise them that they will be called at the end of the net.

Ideally if net control made a call and waited 4 seconds for the squelch tail to drop we wouldn't have the problem. Without Echo Link in the equation we could still call the net roster faster by talking over the squelch tail.

My humble opinion is to pursue calling Echo link members at the start and end of the role and conduct the net at whatever rate suits your particular style.

This isn't so much a solution as a work-around so bear with us.

If you'd like to comment on this please email me (w8eqa@infowest.com) and I'll make your comments available to the club and our top-drawer technician team.

Vy 73

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