

RDXA Field Day Phone Operating Guidelines

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Regarding Dupes:

Always log dupes! Why do this, they are already in our log?

Answer: Yes, the dupe station may very well be in our log, but, we may not be in their log, so, since it takes seconds, go ahead and make the dupe contact and get them in the log again. It cannot hurt, and, can only help.

Operator Selection:

Find good operators, and sign them in advance for two hour slots. Use logs from the previous year to help identify operators.

Phone Operating Strategy During Contest:

High Level:

When operating phone, stay on a single frequency, and call CQ.

Do not begin search and pounce when the Q rate falls off. The rate of QSO in search and pounce is invariably much lower than sticking to one frequency and calling CQ.

Where in the Band to Operate?:

- 1) In general the lower end of the phone band is the place to locate and stay at, otherwise referred to as the “Fat” part of the band.
Why? When other ops come in with a Search and Pounce strategy they invariably start at the lower part of the phone band and work their way up. However, although they start at the low part of the band, they may never make it above the mid part of the band for many possible reasons. So, it is best to stay in the low part of the band.
- 2) Muscle into the bottom part of the band. Don’t worry about a weak signal on the frequency you desire. Be bold but don’t cause intentional interference. Don’t be shy or timid where getting, and, holding a frequency is relevant.
- 3) When another operator attempts to muscle your frequency DO NOT MOVE from the frequency. Keep the frequency.

Managing Phone Band/Frequency During the Contest Duration:

- 1) Start on the 20m band at the outset of the FD radio operations at 2pm Saturday. Why? 20m is more open in the early afternoon, by far, than 40m and 80m. Also, 15m is probably not very fruitful at this moment in the sun spot cycle. So, start at 20m.
- 2) Stay on 20m from approximately 2pm to approximately 6pm calling CQ.
- 3) At 6pm on Saturday, approximately, switch to 40m. Note, if the Q rate remains high on 20m don’t use 6pm as a strict time, keep the Q’s going on 20m until they fade, then, switch to 40m.
- 4) Descending Band QSO Rate Management Strategy: At 12pm/midnight, switch from 40m to 80m. Call CQ until the 80m QSO rate is very low. When that occurs, FIRST, switch back to 40m, low part of the band, and call CQ. If that becomes low switch to 20m and call CQ. If that becomes low, see “switching to FT8 section”.

FT8 Operation During Low phone QSO rates:

High level description: For RDXA FD 2019, an attempt to bolster QSO rates when phone QSO rates decline will be attempted. To this end, a separate transceiver will be available, configured for FT8 will be available (thanks to both K2MTH and W3OAB). The FT8 mode is just the simple standard mode, so, no fox/hound experience in FT8 will be required, and, some FT8 training will occur, hopefully, prior to contest onset.

When and How to Use FT8 During Low Phone QSO Rates?

1. IF there is a 160m antenna available, then, whenever switching to 160m, IF PHONE CONTACTS HAVE TRULY DRIED UP, use FT8.
2. IF you have followed the phone operating strategy carefully, including the night strategy for maintaining high QSO rates for phone, then, rapidly switch to FT8 and begin attempting to make QSO’s

3. IF the time is between midnight, 12pm, and, 6am, then, start the switch from phone to FT8 at 80m. Again, operate only in CQ mode, do not search and pounce. Use the lower part of the band. Upon exhausting all apparent QSO in FT8 on 80m switch to 40m. Follow same procedure as followed on 80m, exhaust all QSO, then, try 20m. Having exhausted all FT8 contacts, switch back to phone 80m and call CQ again following the descending band strategy.

Recordings:

For phone, only use the CQ recording call on the radio. This is simple to set up, requires no prior experience, and, will not waste your time. Upon receiving a response, respond live. ONLY use the K3 recording capability to build a CQ CQ W2RDX in your voice at the outset. Then, get going and keep going. Don't waste any time at all trying to use any recordings from N1MM or other.

Call Timing Assessment Guidelines For Truly Low QSO Rate:

Regarding assessment of slowing rates and when to start thinking of switching bands as QSO's die off on phone: If you have called for 15 complete minutes with no or very low QSO rate, consider switching bands in the descending band strategy. IF you have less than two QSO in 15 minutes, consider switching bands and implementing the descending band strategy for phone which may lead to switching to FT8.