

Glendora Emergency Response Communications group (GERC)

Field Day 2011 On-Air Operating Procedures for K6U (4ALAX)

Adapted from Field Day Primer by John L. Gaffey, WS1E

The object during Field Day operation is to log valid contacts with as many other stations as possible during the allowed operating period. A valid contact requires exchanging call signs and additional information consisting of the station's operating class and their International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Section. The IARU is composed of North and South America including Hawaii, Johnston and Midway Is. The class is composed of a number and a letter. The number signifies the total number of transmitters operated. "A" is a club or group of 3 or more amateurs operating portable with emergency power (generator, battery, etc.). "B" is used by one or two people operating portable with emergency power. Class A and B stations have a subcategory, Battery, where operation is QRP (less than 5 Watts) and entirely from batteries. "C" is used by mobile stations. "D" is used by home stations operating from their normal commercial power source. "E" is a home station operating with emergency power.

The class in which GERC will operate during the 2011 Field Day will be **A (Alpha)**. For the purposes of the example exchanges that follow, the value **4 alpha** is used for the GERC group, and 3 Alpha is used for the other station (AB4NC).

The class information is followed by the section, which for GERC operation is **"Los Angeles" or "LAX"**. Many states have more than one ARRL section, so it is a good idea to have a list of the sections and their common abbreviations handy at the operating position.

Typical Contacts

In response to hearing another stations "CQ," you respond with the full call sign K6U being used by GERC for Field Day. If the station you call hears you, he will respond giving your call sign and his exchange information. You enter the information in the log and respond with your exchange information including call sign. A typical "search and pounce" contact would go as follows:

He calls: "CQ Field Day Alpha Bravo Four November Charlie."

You would respond: "Kilo Six Uniform."

He answers with "K6U Three Alpha North Carolina."

You complete your part with "Four Alpha Los Angeles, K6U."

He confirms and moves on..."Roger, QRZ Alpha Bravo Four November Charlie."

When "running" a frequency (staying on the same frequency and calling CQ, roles are reversed from the above and would go like this:

You make a general call **"CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day Kilo Six Uniform."**

You listen...and hear "K6U here is Alpha Bravo Four November Charlie."

You respond: "Alpha Bravo Four November Charlie Four Alpha Los Angeles."

He answers: "Three Alpha North Carolina" or "Three Alpha North Carolina AB4NC." You confirm and move on **"Roger, QRZ Kilo Six Uniform."**

You listen, and if no one answers, repeat **"CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day Kilo Six Uniform."**

Operating Tips.

To maximize the number of contacts, there are several practices that should be followed. **Call CQ.** Most of the Field Day participating stations will be "casual" operations whose goal may be to work their last needed state for Worked All States or 5-Band Worked All States. These stations will not be calling CQ! They will be tuning the bands **"searching and pouncing"** on stations that they need to achieve their individual goals. The **ONLY** way to log a contact with one of these stations is to keep "K6U" on the air to be heard and called by them.

Keep your calls and listening periods short. Don't make stations wait for you to end a long winded "CQ." Give them frequent opportunities to call you. Similarly, allow enough time for someone to begin a response before calling again, but don't wait longer than necessary. Timing this properly takes some practice.

It is tough to know when to stop CQing and go to a "search and pounce" mode of operation. There are a few stations, serious competitors, in the 2 to 6 station classes that may not do much, if any, "search and pounce" operation. If the rate at which you are getting calls drops off, there may be another station on your frequency that you can't hear (and can't hear you) because of propagation. If the adjacent frequency is clear, you may want to move up or down a bit and try there. Otherwise, a quick pass through the band "searching and pouncing" may be more productive, at least until you can find a new frequency to camp out on, and...you know...**call "CQ!"**

Even after operating in many contests, the decision of when to "search and pounce" is a difficult one, and always subject to second guessing afterwards. If in doubt....**call "CQ!"**

Don't rag chew. Even though Field Day is a somewhat "laid back" contest, don't fall to the temptation to rag chew, especially if you have been receiving one or more responses to each CQ call. The serious competitor will not wait for you to finish chatting! He will recognize that he could log 2, 3 or more contacts while he waited (and possibly you could also have logged as many more!).

Keep your transmissions short. Not only to save your voice but to save time for other contacts, keep the content of your transmissions short and limited to only the essential information. *It is not discourteous to omit "73" from the end of each contact.* If you are "searching and pouncing," you need not formally acknowledge receipt of the "CQing" stations information but need only to respond with your own. If you didn't catch all of his information, a simple "AGAIN?" on phone, should be enough to get the information repeated before you give your portion of the exchange.

Use the full call sign. When "searching and pouncing" always call the station using your full call sign, **never** use just the last two letters. No competent operator working a frequency wants to have to ask anyone to repeat their call if they can copy it initially. They can't copy it if you don't give it! The two letter "call" is very poor operating practice at any time, regardless of how often you may hear it in DX pile ups.

Don't bother duping during the operating period. If you are using a dupe sheet, follow the advice about CQing to the limit, and don't waste time checking to see if a station calling you has been logged before. Let the stations calling you do the duping during the contest. If you follow the advice to call CQ throughout the contest, your dupe rate will be no worse than if you used one and you will log more contacts (based on my own experience at least).

It is the primary objective of the Glendora Emergency Communications group to use Field Day to practice the set up of portable radio equipment in the field and to operate under crowded band conditions. Since our radio operations will be on June 25th only, we are not serious competitors for ARRL points. We will however log all contacts and submit a report to the ARRL. GERC hams who make the furthest contacts on each band we operate on (excluding Echolink) will earn a 2011 GERC DX award. Above all **HAVE FUN and thank you for your participation!**

