Region One Army, Air Force, and Navy/Marine Corps MARS members hosted a tri-service MARS booth at the ARRL Centennial Convention in Hartford, CT.

Army MARS Program Officer Paul English and Operations Officer David McGinnis were on hand to display one of the PRC-150 backpack HF radios carried by U.S. troops with its whip antenna along with a real-time demonstration of the Automatic Link Establishment (ALE).

Also present was the Chief of Air Force MARS Dave Stapchuk, the lead operator at the tri-service MARS station in the Pentagon Garry Sessums, and AF MARS National Emergency Communications Officer Mike Carl.

There were several forums including a slide presentation by Navy/Marine Corp MARS software specialist Hajducek (who could not attend) and moderated by Army MARS member Matt Hackman, and Region 1 Director Bob Mims presented a slide show entitled, “This is not your grandfather’s Army MARS.”
ALE call in progress

L-R Army MARS Region 1 Director Bob Mims, Army MARS HQ PAO Bill Sexton, Army MARS operations officer David McGinnis, Army MARS Program Officer Paul English (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Wait … wait … almost got it …

MARS operations officer David McGinnis (left) is listening for the ALE connect signal transmitted from whip antenna at right. The receiving transceiver is visible behind his left hand. Region 1 Director Bob Mims (center) and program officer Paul English are observing the demonstration. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Air Force MARS members Garry Sessums, Chief of Air Force MARS Dave Stapchuk, and Mike Carl and chat with Paul English. Sessums is the lead operator at the tri-service MARS station in the Pentagon and Carl is the AF MARS National Emergency Communications Officer. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Chief of AF MARS Dave Stapchuk and AF MARS National Emergency Communications Officer Mike Carl explaining MARS to visitors stopping by the MARS booth. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Manning the MARS Booth

L-R Navy/Marine Corp MARS member Stan Pozerski with AF MARS member Marion Juskuv and AF MARS member Tom Carrigan. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
High school student Nicholas Wattendorf N1NRW weighs the military PRC-150 backpack radio (9 pounds without battery) used by Army MARS in a demonstration of ALE as Army MARS Program Officer Paul English explains its features. A new commercial transceiver (IC-8101) at the end of the table had just received Nicholas’s transmission. (photo by Matt Hackman).
Army MARS came to the convention hoping to interest young tech-oriented hams in joining. This lad, thoroughly engrossed by the ALE demonstration using a military backpack HF radio, will have to wait several years before he's eligible. Program officer Paul English explains the transceiver's features, which include digital modes and encryption within a package weighing just under 10 pounds without the four-pound battery needed for field operation. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Frank J. Reshke III, N6SNO, from Sacramento, Calif., watches MARS Operations Officer David McGinnis punch an instruction into the rugged keypad of the Army's PRC-150 "manpack" portable transceiver. This is the manpack set carried by troops in the field. Because of the advanced encryption and other features it contains, you won't be finding it on the surplus market. (Photo by Bill Sexton)
David McGinnis, L and Bob Mims, R visit with fellow Exhibitor Donald Moman from Alberta, Canada. Moman is a member of the Canadian Forces Auxiliary Radio Service (CFARS). (Photo by Matt Hackman)
David McGinnis and Paul English pose with Carey Heckman of Hanover, NH. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Army MARS Region 1 Training Officer Tom Kinahan and Army MARS Operations Officer David McGinnis manning the MARS booth. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Who is this guy with no ID?

L-R Army MARS Region One members Bob Mims, Wayne Bethoney, Fletcher Seagroves (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Region One members catch up

Army MARS Northern New England State Director Ray Machell and Army MARS Northern New England State Training Officer Betty Machell visited with Army MARS member Alex Rokowetz and his lovely XYL Yuki. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Army MARS Bill Sexton and AF MARS Mike Carl ready to answer questions at the MARS booth. (Photo by Matt Hackman)
Conventioneers checking out the PRC-150

Eilif and Carl Mikkelsen of Massachusetts investigate the PRC-150 backpack radio at the MARS booth. (Photo by Matt Hackman)