

Virginia DMR Traffic Net — Rollout Plan & Schedule

Purpose and scope

The net launches on DMRVA TG 3151 (Virginia Statewide) on Tuesday, January 12, 2027, with one weekly session and a planned step up to two sessions after a 60-day pilot. Preparation runs October through December 2026.

Objectives

1. Engage DMR operators, many of them Technicians, in originating, relaying and delivering radiograms.
2. Serve as a standing training net with a deliberate, forgiving pace for newcomers.
3. Extend radiogram coverage into parts of Virginia not reached by the HF and FM traffic nets, using DMRVA's statewide footprint.
4. Feed traffic to and from the NTS/RRI system through liaisons to VN, VSBN, NVTN, 4RN and DTN.
5. Help DMRVA add repeater coverage in Northern Virginia and Tidewater by recruiting repeater owners to link their systems to the network or Talkgroup (see Repeater coverage outreach).

Working name. DMRVA already lists a "Virginia Traffic Net (coming in early 2027)" with day and time TBD. To avoid confusion with the Virginia Net (VN), this plan uses **Virginia DMR Traffic Net (VDTN)**; confirm the final name before DMRVA updates its listing.

Network facts and constraints

Every participant must reach a DMRVA repeater on RF, because TG 3151 on Brandmeister is a separate, unbridged talkgroup. That single fact shapes recruiting, materials and fallback planning.

Factor	What it means for the net
TG 3151 not bridged to Brandmeister	All flyers, scripts and posts say "DMRVA repeaters only." Brandmeister 3151 users will not hear the net.
Coverage is growing	Recent additions include Lynchburg (443.550, Jul 2026), Thornton Mountain near Rocky Mount (Jan 2026), and Wise and Russell counties in far SWVA (2025). These reach areas with thin traffic-net coverage.
Coverage gaps	The Middle Peninsula (Topping) repeater went off the air in Oct 2025 with no relocation date.
Linked-network outages	A Feb 2026 network issue cut several sites (Richmond, Powhatan, Petersburg) off from the network. The net needs a fallback (see Risks).

Factor	What it means for the net
Shared timeslots	Special events can take a timeslot network-wide; Special Olympics used all TS1 talkgroups on the Richmond and Petersburg repeaters in June 2025.
Existing DMRVA nets	SWVA Net (Wed 2000), SWVA Night Owls (Fri 2200), Tidewater DMR Net (Thu 2100), NC VA Fusion (Sat 1930). Avoid these nights so shared repeaters aren't busy on the other timeslot.
Free codeplugs	RATS codeplugs are free; point recruits there instead of paid programming.
DMR voice behavior	Linked-network key-up delay, talk-permit tone and repeater time-out mean radiograms are sent in short groups with a pause before each transmission.

Roles and staffing

The launch needs a Net Manager by October 30 and at least four trained NCS by January 8, so no operator runs more than one session in four during the pilot.

Role	Number	Responsibilities	Appointed by	Target date
Net Manager	1	Runs the net, schedules NCS, files the monthly report, coordinates with DMRVA	STM	Oct 30, 2026
Assistant Net Manager	1	Backs up the NM; owns the practice-message bank and records	Net Manager	Nov 13, 2026
Net Control Stations	4 minimum, 6 goal	Run sessions from the NCS script; mentor newcomers on the air	Net Manager	Trained by Jan 8, 2027
Liaisons	1 primary + 1 backup per outlet	Carry traffic between VDTN	Net Manager, with the other nets' managers	First outlets by Jan 12; all by Feb 26, 2027

Role	Number	Responsibilities	Appointed by	Target date
		and VN, VSBN, NVTN, 4RN, DTN		
Training coordinator	1	Delivers the newcomer curriculum and the NCS course	Net Manager	Nov 13, 2026
Recruitment coordinator	1	Runs outreach, the interest form and the contact list	Net Manager	Oct 30, 2026
DMRVA point of contact	1 (may be the NM)	Single channel to the DMRVA admins for scheduling and outages	Net Manager	Oct 30, 2026

NCS candidates should have run at least one net on any mode and handled radiograms on VN, VSBN or NVTN; liaison candidates need access to both DMRVA and the outlet net's mode.

Day and time

Recommended: **Tuesday evening** for the launch session, with a **Saturday morning** training session added at the March gate. The recruit survey (closes Nov 20) confirms or changes this, and the final choice is announced December 1.

Option	Pros	Cons
Tuesday, 1930–2015 ET (recommended launch)	No DMRVA net that night; evening suits working hams; leaves time for traffic to reach liaisons before the next outlet sessions	Must check against local club nets and VN/VSBN/NVTN session times
Monday, 1930–2015 ET	No DMRVA net; early-week traffic gets a full week to move	Common night for club and ARES nets
Saturday, 1000–1100 ET (recommended second session)	Daylight, relaxed pace, suits a longer hands-on training format	Lower weekend turnout in summer; weekend events may claim timeslots
Sunday, 1600–1645 ET	Good newcomer turnout; feeds early-week outlet sessions	Competes with family time and Sunday club nets

Selection rules

- Avoid Wed, Thu and Fri evenings (existing DMRVA nets) and Sat 1930 (NC VA Fusion).
- Place the session so liaisons can carry listed traffic to VN, VSBN or NVTN at their next session, and bring inbound Virginia traffic back the same day or the next.
- Keep sessions to 45 minutes at launch: about 20 minutes of traffic and 25 minutes of training.
- Hold the time fixed for the whole pilot; changing it early costs check-ins.

Liaison plan

VSBN and NVTN liaisons are needed at launch; VN and DTN follow by February 26, and 4RN is reached through existing section representatives rather than a new VDTN slot.

Outlet net	Mode	Why it matters	VDTN liaison role	In place by
Virginia Sideband Net (VSBN)	HF phone	Main section outlet for phone operators; easiest step up for DMR hams with General privileges	Two-way: carry VDTN outbound traffic; bring inbound Virginia traffic back for delivery	Jan 12, 2027
Northern Virginia Traffic Net (NVTN)	FM	Shares recruits; covers NoVA where DMRVA overlaps	Two-way; also a source of experienced NCS	Jan 12, 2027
Virginia Net (VN)	HF CW	Section CW outlet and a route to regional nets	Two-way through a CW-capable operator who also hears DMRVA	Feb 26, 2027
Digital Traffic Network (DTN)	Winlink	RRI digital path; fast outbound for out-of-state traffic	One-way or two-way through a Winlink station on DMRVA	Feb 26, 2027
Fourth Region Net (4RN)	HF	Regional layer above the section	No direct slot at launch; VN and VSBN representatives carry VDTN traffic upward. Revisit at the six-month review.	Review Jun 29, 2027

Rules for liaisons

- Each outlet has a primary and a backup, published on the monthly roster.
- Liaisons report what they carried each session so the monthly report counts it once.

- Undeliverable traffic gets a service message back to the originator within 48 hours.
- Technicians who want to grow into liaison roles can start with NVTN (FM) and DTN (Winlink on VHF/UHF where available).

Recruitment

The goal is 30 signed-up operators by December 15, 2026, spread across at least five DMRVA coverage regions, with six of them willing to train as NCS or liaison. Outreach runs November 2 through January 29.

Channel	Who to reach	Ask	Lead	Window
DMRVA itself	Regulars on TG 3151 and the DMRVA website	Net listing update, a news post, on-air announcements at the top of the hour	Net Manager + DMRVA admins	Nov 2 – Jan 12
Other DMRVA nets	SWVA Net, Night Owls, Tidewater DMR Net	60-second announcement read by their NCS	Recruitment coordinator	Nov – Dec
Northern Virginia Traffic Net	Current check-ins and NCS	Cross-check-in; NCS and liaison volunteers	STM	Nov – Dec
ARES groups	Section EC/DEC chain, local ARES nets	Radiogram skills as ARES readiness; ECs encourage members to check in	STM via the SEC	Nov – Jan
Radio clubs	Clubs in DMRVA coverage (Richmond/Petersburg, Tidewater, Roanoke/Lynchburg, SWVA, Charlottesville/Farmville, Fredericksburg/NOVA)	15-minute talk at a meeting; newsletter blurb	Recruitment coordinator + volunteers	Nov – Jan

Channel	Who to reach	Ask	Lead	Window
New licensees	License classes, VE sessions, new-ham groups	"Your first radiogram" handout	Training coordinator	Ongoing
Section media	ARRL Virginia Section news, groups.io lists, social media	Launch announcement and recurring reminders	STM	Dec 1 and monthly
Winter hamfests	Section hamfests in Jan–Feb (confirm dates)	Table with live radiogram origination	Recruitment coordinator	Jan – Feb

Materials (reuse existing section pieces)

- Interest form and survey: name, call, DMRVA repeater used, county, radiogram experience, preferred day/time, willingness to serve as NCS or liaison.
- The section trifold brochure, the recruitment flyer and the how-to-send-a-radiogram infographic, each with a "DMRVA repeaters only" line and the net time.
- "The Message Must Get Through" talk, cut to a 15-minute club version.
- A one-page DMR quick-start: codeplug link, Radio ID, setting TG 3151 on the correct timeslot.

Reaching DMR operators

The best prospects are already keying up on DMRVA, so most outreach happens on the air and in DMR-specific communities. Every message makes one point first: the net is on DMRVA repeaters only.

On the air

- **Scheduled announcements on Virginia Statewide.** Short invitations at a few fixed times each week (weekday drive time, Saturday morning), cleared first with the DMRVA team so they follow their etiquette.
- **Announcements on the Brandmeister-bridged talkgroups.** Tidewater Regional, Peninsula Regional, SWVA Regional, Shenandoah Valley Regional and Richmond Metro (BM 31511) reach Brandmeister and hotspot users who will never hear 3151 on DMRVA. Invite them to program a DMRVA repeater for the net.
- **Read-ins on the existing DMRVA nets.** Ask the SWVA, Night Owls and Tidewater DMR net controls to read a 30-second announcement during November and December.
- **Personal invitations.** NCS and volunteers who hear active stations on Statewide invite them on the air. This works better than any post.
- **"Meet the net" sessions.** Two informal pre-launch check-ins on Statewide, which can double as the Dec 15 and Jan 5 dry runs. Newcomers hear what the net sounds like before they're asked to handle traffic.

Removing the DMR barriers

- **Codeplug and programming help.** DMRVA doesn't program radios, and that stops many Technicians. Offer programming sessions at club meetings and the hamfest table, using the free RATS codeplugs.
- **Partner with RATS.** The Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society hosts the codeplugs and is a natural ally for meetings, newsletter space and Richmond-area NCS.
- **One-page quick start.** Radio ID, which repeater to use, setting Virginia Statewide, and the net time, with a QR code to the interest form.

Online

- **A DMRVA news post and net listing.** Ask DMRVA to post the launch on its home page, where DMR users check repeater news.
- **Virginia DMR and ham groups.** Facebook groups, groups.io lists and club email lists in DMRVA coverage areas, plus ARRL Virginia Section and RRI news channels.
- **A sample net audio clip.** Two minutes of a model radiogram exchange on DMR, posted with every announcement, so listeners hear the pace before checking in.

Giving people a reason to check in

- Frame it as something useful to do with a DMR radio, and as ARES readiness.
- Launch-month "send your first radiogram" drive: every check-in originates one message to family or a friend, and the net delivers it.
- "Bring a buddy": each regular invites one DMR user they know.
- Recognition: first-message and first-delivery certificates; shout-outs in the monthly report.

Messaging calendar

When	Message	Channels
Nov 2	Net coming in January; interest form open	Statewide and bridged TGs, other DMRVA nets, groups, clubs
Dec 1	Day and time announced; quick start and audio clip	DMRVA news post, section news, all groups
Dec 15 and Jan 5	"Meet the net" sessions	On air, groups
Week of Jan 4	Launch reminder; first-radiogram drive	All channels
Jan 19	Recap of the first session (check-ins, messages, counties)	Groups, section news
Monthly after	Results and newcomer recognition	Section news, groups

Sample on-air announcement (about 30 seconds)

This is [call] with an announcement for Virginia DMR operators. Starting Tuesday, January 12, the Virginia DMR Traffic Net meets Tuesdays at 7:30 PM on Virginia Statewide, on DMRVA repeaters only. It's a friendly training net where you'll learn to send and deliver radiograms, and no experience is needed. Find the net on dmrva.org or contact [name and call]. [Call], clear.

Repeater coverage outreach (NoVA and Tidewater)

The net's best contribution is to find qualified repeater owners, show them real demand, and hand them to the DMRVA team, which makes every linking decision. Goal: one new linked site in each region, or a firm commitment, by the June 29, 2027 review.

Where the gaps are (July 2026 DMRVA matrix)

Region	DMRVA sites today	Other DMR repeaters in the region (prospects)	Gap on DMRVA
Northern Virginia	Alexandria (W4HFH, 442.4125); Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania (WX4EMC) to the south	Tysons Corner, Fairfax, Alexandria (systems other than W4HFH)	Tysons/Fairfax corridor, Loudoun, Prince William and Manassas
Tidewater / Hampton Roads	None; New Kent is the nearest site, and the Middle Peninsula repeater is off the air	Virginia Beach, Rushmore, Hampton, Yorktown	The whole Southside and Peninsula metro area

A Tidewater Regional talkgroup already runs on DMRVA and is connected to Brandmeister, and the Statewide talkgroup is static on every DMRVA repeater. Both are useful talking points with owners.

What DMRVA requires, so we only bring qualified prospects

- Motorola Mototrbo repeaters only; DMRVA links no homebrew repeaters, for reliability.
- A site and owner willing to run as part of a full-time production network; DMRVA is privately financed.
- Owners start the conversation through the DMRVA contact page, and DMRVA sets the terms.

How to engage owners

1. **Agree the approach with DMRVA first (by Oct 23).** Ask KD4BPZ and K4JK which areas they want, what hardware and site terms they need, and whether they want warm introductions or just referrals. Use one referral path, so owners aren't approached twice.
2. **Build the candidate list (Nov).** Start with the known systems in the table above and record each one's owner, make (Mototrbo or not) and current network; then pull other DMR repeaters in both regions from SERA coordination records, RepeaterBook and the Brandmeister repeater list; ask club repeater trustees and ARES ECs which systems they know.

3. **Show demand with data (Nov–Dec).** The interest form asks each recruit's county and whether they can reach a DMRVA repeater. A one-page map of would-be participants with no access is the strongest argument to an owner.
4. **Lead with what the owner gains.** Statewide reach for local users, an always-on Statewide talkgroup for ARES and served agencies, a scheduled traffic and training net that brings activity, and a professionally run backbone. Regional talkgroups such as Tidewater Regional still reach Brandmeister users.
5. **Answer the switching concerns honestly.** Owners now on Brandmeister will ask what their users lose. Get DMRVA's answer on keeping BM-bridged regional talkgroups before the first meeting.
6. **Make personal, local introductions (Dec–Mar).** A short talk at the owner's club or ARES meeting, given jointly with a DMRVA team member where possible. The STM and DEC carry more weight than a cold email.
7. **Offer a trial (Jan–Apr).** Ask DMRVA whether one of its portable repeaters can run a demonstration net at a Tidewater or NoVA hamfest, ARES exercise or club event.
8. **Pursue new sites where no Mototrbo repeater exists.** County EOCs, hospitals and served-agency towers have hosted DMRVA sites before (e.g., Fredericksburg hospital district). Clubs or ARES groups may sponsor hardware for a donated site.
9. **Track and report.** The Net Manager keeps a prospect log (owner, site, status, next step), reviewed at each monthly report and at the March and June gates.

Prospect type	Likely interest	Next step
Mototrbo repeater on Brandmeister	Medium: wants statewide reach, may worry about losing BM talkgroups	Joint meeting with DMRVA; answer the BM question up front
Standalone Mototrbo repeater (no network)	High: linking adds value with little loss	Referral to DMRVA with demand map
Non-Motorola or homebrew repeater	Low: does not meet DMRVA's hardware rule	Thank them; note the site as a possible future host
Site owner with no repeater (EOC, hospital, club tower)	Varies: depends on sponsor for hardware	Pair with a club or ARES sponsor, then refer to DMRVA

Training program

Every session carries a 25-minute training segment on a six-week cycle, so a Technician who joins at any point can send and receive a radiogram on the air within six weeks. The cycle repeats through the pilot.

Week	Topic	On-air practice
1	What NTS and RRI are, and where a radiogram goes after this net	Check in, listen to a model exchange

Week	Topic	On-air practice
2	The radiogram form: preamble, precedence (including Certified), address, text, signature	Copy a practice message read slowly by NCS
3	Voice procedure on DMR: phonetics, "figures," "initial," "I spell," short groups, pausing for the talk-permit tone	Each newcomer reads back one message
4	Net procedure: checking in with traffic, listing, directed exchanges, fills and repeats	Send one practice message to NCS
5	Originating: ARL numbered texts, book traffic, counting the check	Originate a message to a real recipient
6	Delivery and records: phone, email, mail; service messages; logging for the monthly report	Deliver an inbound message and report it

NCS course (Dec 1 – Jan 8): three sessions on the NCS script, running a list, pacing for newcomers, handling network dropouts, and the monthly report. Two dry-run nets on Dec 15 and Jan 5 complete it.

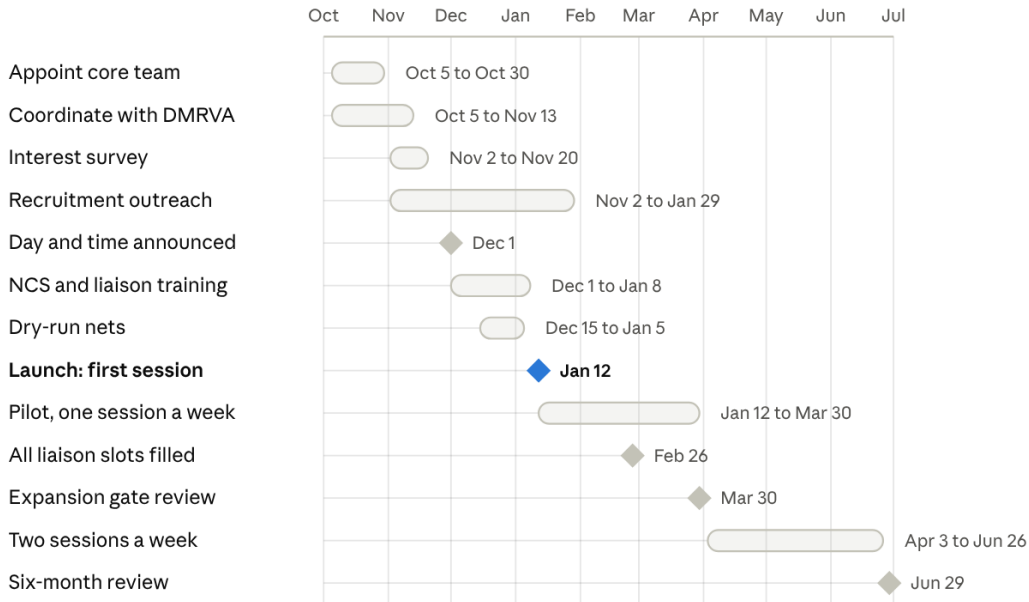
Supporting material: a one-page quick reference, the NCS script, a bank of practice radiograms tagged by county, and a "message of the week" so every check-in has something to send. Experienced operators are paired with newcomers as mentors through their first delivery.

Rollout schedule

Preparation runs October 5 to January 8, the net launches Tuesday, January 12, 2027, and the March 30 gate decides whether a Saturday session is added in April.

The net goes live January 12, 2027 after three months of preparation

VDTN rollout, Oct 2026 to Jun 2027; the Mar 30 gate decides the second weekly session



VDTN rollout · Oct 2026 to Jun 2027

Dry runs fall on Tuesdays, Dec 15 and Jan 5, at the planned net time; the six-month review on June 29 sets the second half of 2027, including any 4RN role.

Metrics and expansion criteria

The net adds its Saturday session at the March 30 gate only if all four expansion criteria hold over the prior four weeks; otherwise it stays weekly and the gate repeats June 29.

Measure	Expansion threshold (4-week average)	Source
Check-ins per session	12 or more	NCS log
Radiograms handled per session (originated, relayed, delivered)	6 or more, live plus training traffic	NCS log + liaison reports
Qualified NCS on the roster	5 or more	Net Manager
Sessions with a liaison to VSBN or NVTN present	3 of 4	Liaison reports

Also tracked, not gating: check-ins by county, to show coverage added where no other traffic net reaches; newcomers who complete the six-week cycle; and messages delivered within 48 hours.

Reporting: the Net Manager sends the STM a monthly net report (sessions, check-ins, traffic count, NCS and liaison roster) by the 5th of the following month, for inclusion in the section's NTS reporting.

Risks and mitigations

The two risks most likely to stall the pilot are too few NCS and too little real traffic; both are addressed before launch.

Risk	Mitigation
Too few NCS; burnout	Train six, schedule no one more than one session in four, keep a standing backup each week
Too little live traffic	Message of the week, ARL numbered texts, radiograms to friends and served agencies, training traffic counted separately
Linked-network outage at net time	Backup NCS in a different region; if the net is split, each segment runs a short session and holds traffic; announce on groups.io; route urgent traffic via NVTN or VSBN
Brandmeister 3151 users try to join	"DMRVA repeaters only" on every flyer, post and preamble
Timeslot claimed by a special event	Ask DMRVA for advance notice; publish an alternate date
Newcomers intimidated	Slow, scripted pace; mentors; no-traffic check-ins welcome; training segment every session
Liaison gaps at outlet nets	Primary + backup per outlet; hold traffic no more than 48 hours before rerouting
Coverage gaps (e.g., Middle Peninsula)	Route those areas through NVTN, VSBN or DTN; track DMRVA repeater additions

Next 30 days

- ☐ Appoint the Net Manager and recruitment coordinator (Oct 30)
- ☐ Contact the DMRVA team: confirm timeslot, second talkgroup, hotspot policy, time-out values (Oct 23)
- ☐ Agree the net name and update the DMRVA nets listing (Oct 30)
- ☐ Draft the net charter, NCS script and interest form (Oct 30)
- ☐ Brief the VSBN, VN and NVTN managers and ask for liaison volunteers (Oct 30)
- ☐ Open the interest form and survey (Nov 2)

Sources

- [DMRVA home page and news posts](#) (coverage additions, outages, events)
- [Virginia DMR Nets, DMRVA](#) (existing nets; updated Aug 8, 2026)

- [DMRVA About](#) (network mission, invitation to repeater owners)
- [DMRVA FAQs](#) (Mototrbo-only linking, hotspot policy, Statewide and Brandmeister talkgroups)
- [DMRVA Talkgroup Matrix, July 25, 2026](#) (repeater sites by region)