Please do not send in scanned images of your application as this is very difficult to process.  Save the application first, then open it and fill It out, save it, and send that as an attachment.

What is the mission of Air Force MARS?  This is a question that comes up quite frequently.  Very simply, MARS is a DOD recognized Auxiliary, charged by DOD I 4650.02 "(to provide) high frequency (HF) radio communications support to DOD through the use of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licensed, volunteer radio operators, as directed by the Services and coordinated within the DOD."

Below are some brief descriptions of what we do and what is required.  Please read the information below carefully to be sure you can dedicate the time to do the initial training and meet the continuing hours requirements.   Please know that by signing the application you are not committing to Air Force MARS, you are vouching for the accuracy and truthfulness of the information on the forms only.  You are accepted into Air Force MARS for training when you receive your training call sign and are a full member when you finish training and receive your final official call sign.

Prospective Air Force MARS members must meet these requirements for membership prior to submitting their applications:
- US Citizenship or Legal Resident Alien status
- Age 18 or older
- FCC issued amateur radio license (any class)
- An operational HF radio station (we have No operations on VHF or UHF) and a wire antenna capable of transmitting 2.0 - 30 MHz, This generally requires a modification to the radio. 100 W PEP SSB minimum output (upper side-band required), and capable of operating outside of the amateur bands. Air Force MARS operates 99 percent of the time below or close to 40 meters.
- Windows 10 or 11 PC and support for digital modes internally within your radio or via an external sound card device with hardware PTT.
- Internet service is necessary for many AFMARS interactions, and for access to programs and instructions.

The reason we ask this is that you will have **180 days** from receipt of your training call sign to finish training and getting on the nets is a large part of completing that training.

 Please return the completed documents along with a reference copy of your FCC License to the [HQCCC.AFMARS@US.AF.MIL] email .  I can then begin the membership process by referring you to your state commander.

Please do not scan and email the application and questionnaire as it is difficult to process scanned image files either as .PDF or. JPG files.

Below are some points to consider before you commit to Air Force MARS.
1. We are a DOD Military auxiliary, so we are always tasked by the military chain of command.
2. We are 99% HF nets, exercises and special operations missions.
3. We have not deployed in many years.
4. Requirements for membership and maintaining your participation are covered below.
5. All members must qualify as Net Control Stations. Your training covers that, and you will lead a net as part of your training.
6. Our nets are conducted on HF USB, using Military frequencies, so your radio and antenna must be able to transmit outside the ham bands.
7. Message traffic is handled using the M110A digital protocol, so either your radio must have digital capability built in, or you can use an outboard device with hardware PTT for the A to D conversion

<u>Suggested Response to AMFARS Membership Inquiry, cont'd.</u>

8. We use a software modem which is furnished.
9. Our furnished digital messaging software, Network Operations Software System (NOSS) handles your message traffic.
10. Air Force MARS is not able to modify or open up any radio which you may have, but once you are in training the license is the verification you may need to have that work done for you, if you are not able to do it yourself.
11. Air Force MARS does not in any way interface with ARES or RACES operations. We can support emergency management as Amateur radio operators but are not allowed to use Military frequencies or software unless we receive an operational order from the US Air Force.

<u>Training:</u>
To qualify for full membership in AFMARS, your training activities must be completed within **180 days** of your receipt of your AFMARS License. Your training will be administered by your Wing Training Officer.

1. During your training, you will be required to serve as the Net Control Station during a live MARS net operation in your Wing,
2. You will be required to compose and send as well as receive messages to demonstrate your understanding and ability to use the software.
3. There is an open-book test at the conclusion of the course.
4. Additional Computer Based training for Protection of Personal Information (PPI) and Computer Security is required and must be repeated every 2 years.
5. You will be required to learn and follow proper military protocol and procedure while operating on Military frequencies [no ham style communications allowed]

**The estimated time per week to finish the training within the time given is about four to five hours per week.**

<u>Participation Requirements:</u>
To remain qualified, you must be operational in your primary assignment, generally your Wing Traffic Net, for 12 hours per calendar quarter and you must participate in one of the four quarterly communications exercises we conduct each year. You must also complete two computer based training assignments on Personal Protected Information and on Communication security every two years.

<u>AFMARS Software Package:</u>
The AFMARS message handling application (Network Operations Software System - NOSS) is furnished to you, as is our software modem and our offline encryption/decryption application. Software update and backup operations coordination are handled via internet contact.

I think that you'll enjoy serving in AFMARS and I know that our country will be better with you on our team.


Website link
https://community.apan.org/wg/air-force-military-auxiliary-radio-system-afmars/

FCC License link
https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/UlsSearch/searchLicense.jsp