Missouri ARES® District "B" Operations Guide

This document covers the counties of: Putnam, Sullivan, Linn, Chariton, Schuyler, Adair, Macon, Randolph, Scotland, Knox, Shelby, Monroe, Clark, Lewis, Marion and Ralls in Northeast Missouri

January 2021

This document is designed with all ARES® personnel in mind, whether you are a newly appointed EC or ARES® member, or have held your position for some time. It is hoped that this guide will help you establish, or improve relations with served agencies in your area, but also to better establish emergency communications when and where they are needed.

1. Overview:

In order to better understand ARES®, we will first look at the ARES® program. In the United States there are currently 4 levels of ARES. The first is the National Level, which is administered by the ARRL under the control of the Emergency Preparedness Assistant. Next is the Section level, which is administered by the Section Emergency Coordinator. Third is the District level, which in Missouri, corresponds with the appropriate Highway Patrol Troop boundaries and designation. The fourth and final level is the city/county level, which is administered by the Emergency Coordinator. Depending upon the size of the area covered by the Emergency Coordinator, they may have one or more Assistant Emergency Coordinators.

2. Members:

Upon appointment as an ARES® member, each person should contact their Emergency Coordinator to see what training requirements they may have to meet. The Missouri Section Emergency Coordinator has set basic training requirements for ARES® members, which mirror the ARRL Strategic Plan requirements for ARES®. These requirements are the completion of the following:

1. ARRL Introduction to Emergency Communications (EC-001)
2. FEMA Introduction to Incident Command System (IS-100)
3. FEMA ICS for single resources and initial action incidents (IS-200)
4. FEMA IS-700
5. FEMA IS-800
6. Training on message handling both for the National Traffic System and Incident Command

The EC-001 class can be found on the ARRL website at www.arrl.org and the FEMA classes can be found at https://training.fema.gov/is. There is no cost for any of these classes and are all on-line classes

In addition, the ARES® members should register with the ARRL ARES® Connect program. This program is a way for individual members to list their training and qualifications. It is also a program where EC's, DEC's and SEC's can see who they may have available for personnel in a disaster. Also in the ARES® section of the ARRL website, is a downloadable copy of the ARES® manual. It is strongly recommended that each member download and print off a copy for their personal use.

3. Emergency Coordiators:

Upon appointment as an EC, there are several things that you should do. First, establish contact with your District Emergency Coordinator and Assistant DEC. These two people can be very important to not only help build an ARES® program, but also as resources in the event of a disaster. One of the next things you should do is to determine if there is a local ARES® group in your area and if there are any Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) in place. If the answer to both of these is "yes" then that is a good start. You should establish contact with the group, finding out any strengths/weaknesses of the group, and look at the MOU's to see what served agencies you will be working with.

If the answer to these questions is "no", then this will give you a place to start. See if there is a local radio club or clubs in the area. If there are, contact them and see if it would be possible to attend one of their meetings and start recruiting members. Also you can contact the ARRL to see about getting address labels for hams in your area. Another resource is QRZ.com, where you can do a search by county for licensed amateurs. With this info, you can do mailings to see about recruiting members. Also look for local hamfests and see about setting up a table to recruit. Licensing classes, NWS storm spotter classes would also be a good place to see about doing a small presentation or having an information table set up.

If there are no MOU's present, then you as EC will have to first look to see what you have for served agencies in your area. These may range from local/county Emergency Management agencies to the Red Cross to local/county health departments. If there are multiple municipalities in your county, then you will need to also look at what agencies they may have.

Your next step should be to contact these agencies, introduce yourself and schedule a meeting with them to determine if ARES® would be an asset to them and their mission. One thing to consider is not to overextend yourself and take on responsibilities and agencies that you cannot handle. Start with what you and your group can honestly handle. Once you have decided what agency(ies) you can work with, sit down with them and determine what services they may need. In addition, determine what training requirements they may have for your personnel. Take this information back to your group and go over it with them, so your personnel can become familiar with the needs and requirements

While you are doing this, you should take this information and turn it into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will be a document that spells out the responsibilities of both the ARES® group and the served agency. Copies of a MOU that can function as a guide for you can be found on the ARRL website under MOU's. Once this is written up with all parties involved reviewing the document for accuracy, it should be signed by all parties involved (EC, host agency, DEC and SEC). A signed copy should be retained by both the EC and the served agency head.

While all of this is going on, you still have to work on and with your group. You should start a file for each member, and include in it their ARES® application and copies of their FCC license, as well as any training certificates that they have completed. You should also be working on an EOP, if one doesn't exist for the group, This should include training requirements, activation procedures, and anything else the EC deems necessary for the plan. To help your members keep track of their progress with their training, each member should be given a copy of the ARES® Standardized Training Plan Individual Task Book, which can be found on the ARRL website in the ARES® section. As each member completes a section in the book, the EC signs off on the section.

4. Training and Meetings:

As EC, you should endeavor to hold a meeting of your group once a month, and also attempt to incorporate training into the meetings. This could be something along the lines of programming an HT to completing an ICS form. You should also encourage your members to obtain as much training as possible to make your group better prepared for any situation. If there is an event, such as a marathon, taking place in your area, talk with the organizers to see if you have something to offer them. This could be

anything from communications assistance to manpower for water stations. Don't limit yourself and your group to communications. Anything that you can offer, will make you more valuable to your served agencies. Also look to your membership. If you have a member who has an extensive background in the medical field, see if they would be able to teach a first aid or CPR class for your people. If someone works in a 911 center, they could give your people an overview of 911 and what they are looking for as far as information during normal emergencies, as well as disaster situations. Some of your own people can be your best resources.

While all of this I going on, you should also be working on your won training. In addition to the basic requirements for ARES® members, the EC should also complete the ARRL EC-016 course, which is designed for ARES® management personnel (EC,AEC,DEC,ADEC and up). This is offered in the same format as the EC-001 course. It is also recommended to complete the ICS-300 and 400 courses. These are Incident Command System courses for upper level management personnel, but these courses are taken in a classroom situation and you may have to travel for them. It is also recommended to become a member in the National Weather Service NWS Chat . This is a real-time chatroom group, with each chat room corresponding to the NWS office. In times of severe weather, it is a direct reporting route to the NWS for things like tornados, and other severe weather. A final recommendation for EC's is to take the State Emergency Management Agency WebEOC class. This is a virtual Emergency Operation Center program that is used in disasters, as well as other special events. This again allows direct reporting to local Emergency Management agencies, as well as County and State and Federal agencies as well.

5. Emergency Operations:

This may be anything from a request to help search for a lost person to a tornado touch down to an earthquake to a request to send operators to another area to help with a disaster. Your Emergency Operation Plan should spell out what your personnel should be doing, along with who and where to report. There should be a supply of the needed forms (radiograms, welfare forms, ICS forms) already at the locations your personnel will report to or the EC should have packets of these forms in each member's possession for them to take to their assignments. A suggested forms package is included in Appendix A.

If the disaster response is in your own area, the first thing your personnel should do before responding, is to make sure that their family is safe. Next comes the safety of your responding personnel. Do not allow your people to place themselves in harm's way. They will do no good to anyone if they are injures or killed while responding. Once they have arrived at their location, the operator should check in with the person in charge, and if their equipment is prepositioned, then they should open their station and report to the net control station. A suggested list for equipment for a operator to have at a station is enclosed in Appendix B.

The EC, and /or AEC should be at the EOC, or wherever the command center will be. One of these people should function as the Net Control Station for the event. If additional nets need to be established, additional personnel may be needed for these nets. Disaster nets should be directed nets, stations DO NOT transmit unless it is an emergency, unless directed by the Net Control Stations. Logs, whether they be paper or digital, should be kept of all transmissions, messages sent and replies received. In addition, copies of all messages sent and received should also be kept by the operator. The old adage, "If it isn't written down, then it didn't happen." is especially true in disaster situations. As always, take your time in writing down a message, and make sure that the message answers the basic questions, "who, what, when, where, why and how." If you are not sure, read the message back to the sender, or originator, and ask for any fills.

The EC, and/or AEC should be in constant contact with their DEC and/or ADEC, to ensure that they have adequate staffing for the positions needed. Ideally, operators should do NO MORE than an 8 hour shift, without relief. There should be additional operators at each location, in case of illness, or to cover meal and/or call of nature breaks. Most importantly, if an operator suddenly feels overwhelmed or, in need of time away from the station to recharge, a relief operator needs to be available. Also counselors should be available to all ARES® personnel at any time during a disaster, as well as after a disaster is over, to help deal with any stress related issues.

6. Shutdown and After Action Reports:

Eventually the need for our services will end, and we will be release from our stations. When operators receive the word to close down their station, they should contact the NCS and inform them that the station will be

shutting down. Once you have received permission from the NCS, shut your station down. and begin cleaning up your area. Always leave your station in better shape than you found it. Collect all copies of your log sheets and all messages handled by your station. A copy of these should be left with the person in charge of your location, for their records, and a copy should also be given to your EC for their records of the incident. Determine if there will be a "hot wash" briefing at the conclusion of the incident, and where/when it will be held. If the operator cannot attend it in person, write down all comments about the operation, including what went well, and what went wrong. along with possible suggestions/ideas to improve things. Make sure that copies go to the person in charge as well as your EC. If more forms are needed to replenish depleted inventory, let your EC know. When you leave the site, thank the staff for their help and allowing you to help them. In addition, let your NCS know that you are leaving, and when you arrive home, let NCS know that you have arrived safely.

Once all operations have ended, the EC should call together all ARES® personnel involved for a "Hot wash" review. This is a review of what happened, not only with the overall situation, but also at specific locations. The review is designed to show what worked, and why, what didn't work and why, and what can be done to improve things the next time. This gives the EC ideas for future training, as well as new avenues to look at for training. When this is completed, the minutes from this meeting should be written up in an After Action Report. Copies of this should be distributed to all personnel involved in the incident, including all served agencies. That way, they will also know what things they may need to work on and with ARES®.

7. Conclusion:

It is hoped that this document provides some guidance for EC's and ARES® personnel in general. Some of the things mentioned in these pages have been done by EC's throughout the country and are nothing new. It is hoped that this will help make your job that much easier. 73 and we'll see you down the log.

Appendix A: Forms pack

This is the cover page of the forms packet. It is available for download at www.qsl.net/nf4rc under Emergency Communications Resources. The pack contains copies of all needed NIMS forms, blank radiograms, instructions on how to complete in NIMS forms, as well as articles on field expedient antennas and digital modes. The PDF allows you to change the cover to add your own ARES® group name on the cover,

2018 Alachua County
Emergency Communications
Reference

NAME / CALLSIGN	
LOCATION	
Begin Service Date/Time	
End Service Date/Time	

Gordon L. Gibby KX4Z NCS521
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If you would like the PDF please contact
docvacuumtubes@gmail.com

Appendix B: Equipment List

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
Recommended Equipment

HANDI-TALKIE 2 Meter 5 Watt
Extended Operation Battery Power
Extra HT battery
12 v 1.2 Ah (or greater) battery with lighter socket
Power plug with lighter plug
Power plug with 110v adapter (extension cord)
Antenna
¼ wave mag mount
½ wave mag mount – No ground plane required
Jumper coax (RG-174) from radio to mag mount connector to eliminate stress
        on the HT antenna connector.
Twin lead roll up J-Pole - Suction cup / clip for mounting
Mic / Headphone
Head phones - 1 ear style
Remote mic
Head phone with boom mic
Extra Power Option
30 watt "Brick" amp with lighter plug
"Y" adapter for HT & amp operation from 1 socket
And / 0r
MOBILE RADIO (Multiple power settings including less than 50 watts)
Power
Power connector plug with adapter to lighter plug
Power supply - Include extension cord
HD 12 volt battery with adapter to radio power connector
Antenna
¼ wave mag mount
½ wave mag mount – No ground plane required
Mic / Headphone
Head phones - 1 ear style
IDENTIFICATION
ARES ID Badge FCC License Drivers License
Ham Radio Sign - Mount in car window or put at radio setup station