



Developing an Emergency Communications Plan

For ARES Emergency Coordinators



Who Needs an Emergency Communications Plan?

- **Section Emergency Coordinator**
 - “Advise the SM on all section emergency policy and planning, including the development of a section emergency communications plan”
- **District Emergency Coordinator**
 - “Coordinate the interrelationship between local emergency plans and between communications networks within your area of jurisdiction.”

YOU DO!

- **Emergency Coordinator**
 - “Develop detailed local operational plans with ‘served’ agency officials in your jurisdiction that set forth precisely what each of your expectations are during a disaster operation. Work jointly to establish protocols for mutual trust and respect. Technical issues involving message format, security of message transmission, Disaster Welfare Inquiry policies, and others, should be reviewed and expounded upon in your detailed local operations plans.”



It's Part of Your Job

- All the preceding quotations are from their respective Job Descriptions on the ARRL Website.
- It stands to reason that if we are going to serve during emergencies, that we should plan what it is that we will do... before “just showing up with a belt full of Baofengs!”
- Let's take a look at the parts of an Emergency Plan



Organization

- Mission and Relationships
 - ARES Mission Statement
 - ARES Leadership Roles & Responsibilities
 - ARES Structure and Organization
 - Partner Agencies
 - Agreements, MoU and SoC Documents
 - Capabilities and Limitations



Training

- Levels of ARES Members
 - Capabilities and limitations of each level
 - Training requirements for each level
 - Numbers of ARES Members in each level
- Training Standards
 - NIMS and ICS Courses required
 - Other agency requirements



Qualifications

- Certificates earned at each level
 - Number of certified ARES members
 - Issuance of Certifications
 - FCC Licenses and capabilities of licensees
- Experience in drills and actual deployments
 - Cumulative man-hours of on-air practice
 - Skills demonstrated in training and actual deployments



Credentialing

- ARRL Credentials (when they become available)
 - Numbers currently credentialed
 - Limitations of Credentials
- Other Credentials
 - Partner Agency-issued credentials
 - What's authorized, # of ARES members
 - FEMA Training Certificates & Transcripts
 - Background Clearances



Partner Agencies

- Public Safety Agencies
- Voluntary Agencies
 - Red Cross
 - Salvation Army
 - Community Emergency Response Teams
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Shelter providers



Operations

- Definitions
- Alerts
 - Procedures
 - Limitations
- Deployments
 - Procedures
 - Limitations



Capabilities

- Radio Communications
 - Equipment requirements
 - Operator requirements
 - Security
- Non-Amateur Radio assignments
 - Limitations & liabilities
 - Priorities
 - Operator availability & work hours



Services We Perform

- Messaging
 - Operational messages for agencies in need
 - Health & Welfare messaging (in and out)
- Technical assistance
- Manpower (within our abilities and training)
- Trained Operators (within license & experience)
- Communications Engineering support (maybe...)



Logistics

- Terms and Limits of our Service
- How and when we can secure/terminate ops
- Personal equipment security
- Transportation, meals and shelter
- Insurance, medical requirements, injuries
- Taking leave



Messaging Capabilities

- Types of messages
- Timeframe for message delivery
 - Local vs Distant
- Limitations of our technology
 - Message size limits
- Legal restrictions
 - No codes or ciphers
 - Third Party restrictions for DX



Continuous Improvement

- After Action evaluations
- Lessons Learned
- Revising plans based on experiences
- Observers & oversight by agencies
- Input from stakeholders
- Outreach to partner agencies and the communities we serve



Standards

- NIMS & ICS Compliance & Alignment
- ARES Procedures, Forms and Best Practices
- Partner Agency requirements/SOPs/Protocols
- Safety Requirements
- Legal obligations



Documents

- Agreements, MoUs and SoCs
- Personnel records
 - Emergency Contacts
 - Medical Information
 - Licenses
- Other records as required
- Reference Manuals



Documents 2

- Band plans
- Repeater & Frequency lists
- Staff & Member Directory & Calling lists
- Partner Agency Contact Information
- Upstream Contact Information
- Net frequencies and times



Documents 3

- ARRL Forms
- ICS Forms
- Partner Agency Forms