Arkansas Section ARES
Emergency Operations Plan

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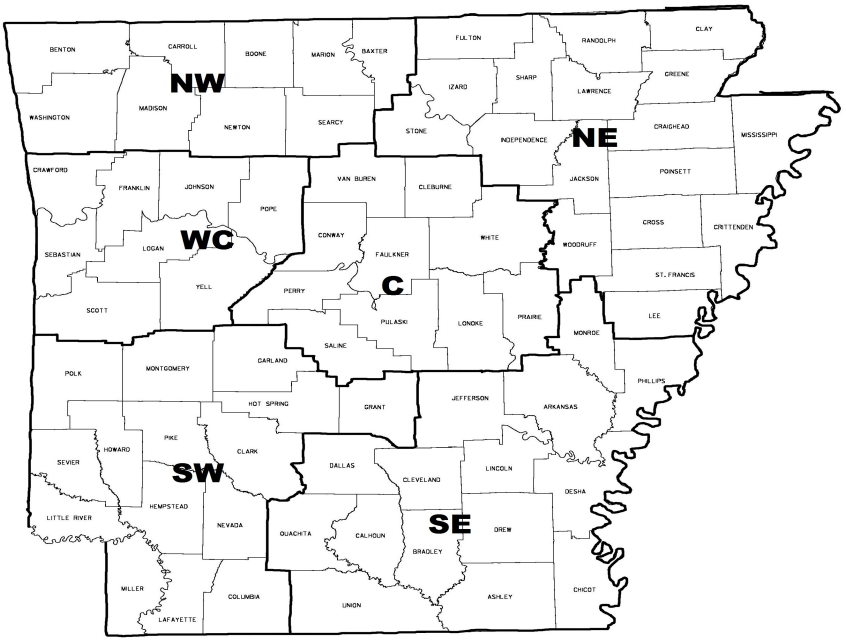

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1. **Background**
The Amateur Radio Service is authorized under Part 97 of the Federal Communications Commission's rules as a "voluntary non-commercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications." The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) facilitates emergency communications through its Field Organization in general and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) in particular.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is the emergency branch of the ARRL Field Organization. It operates under the direction of the Section Manager, an elected position within the Field Organization. There are 71 sections in the United States and its possessions. The State of Arkansas is comprised of one section. Within the Arkansas Section, there are 6 districts and 75 Arkansas counties. Each of the local jurisdictions should have an EC assigned. These designated EC's report to their respective DEC in each of the 6 districts who in turn report to the SEC.

An updated listing of Arkansas Section ARES leadership is kept at http://www.ArArrl.org and all members are encouraged to keep contact information for their respective areas on hand.

ARES operates to serve both governmental and non-governmental agencies through "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOUs). These MOUs are non-binding letters explaining the 'participating parties' roles and responsibilities and are initiated at both the national and section levels. Written MOUs need not be in place on a section or local level if they exist on a national level. Section level MOUs must originate with the Section Emergency Coordinator and must be approved and signed by the Section Manager prior to their execution. MOUs transfer in-kind as new Section Managers are elected unless specifically canceled by the incoming Section Manager. Agencies signatory to MOUs are referred to as "Served Agencies."

It is the intention of this plan to provide guidelines for training and usage of amateur radio volunteer communicators. The Arkansas Section ARES organizations recognize the role of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) to government agencies as auxiliary communications links during times of emergency. It is also the intention of this plan to provide for adequate training and preparation of ARES operators to assist with the needs of the state and local government communications as required. It is the recommendation of this plan that all ARES operators register with their local civil defense agencies. This fulfills the mandatory registration requirements of Part 97 for RACES operators. It will also provide a larger contingent of qualified operators that may be utilized during emergencies regardless of affiliation with ARES or RACES. ARES operators should be prepared to assist any agency whether government or private sector as dictated by the needs of any given situation.
The Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) shall establish the training standards for new ARES volunteers and ensures that all new ARES operators complete a basic curriculum for emergency communications training. The SEC shall ensure that all districts within the section have adequate training available and regular exercises so that the section as a whole maintains a high degree of readiness.

2. **Purpose**
The purpose of this plan is to outline the ARES organization in the Arkansas Section and present the basic information required for effective operation during an emergency. It will also contain appendices, which constitute the bulk of the "living document," as submitted by the various District Emergency Coordinators (DECs) and Emergency Coordinators (ECs). This plan is intended to be updated periodically, on an as-needed basis.

This plan is not intended to be the "last word" in emergency operations, but to be a resource in planning and operations. Recommendations for training are presented as a guideline to establish minimum standards for qualifying amateurs as ARES operators. ARES operator training will include items established by the Arkansas State Emergency Management Agency for RACES operators. All training should be tailored to meet the needs of the agencies and communities served. Any additions, deletions or corrections affecting the section level should be brought to the attention of the Section Emergency Coordinator and Section training Coordinator. All submissions will be given due consideration for inclusion in updates as they are released.

3. **Organization**
The field services leadership of the Arkansas Section is outlined as follows:

Section Manager:	Dale Temple,	W5RXU@arrl.net
Section Emergency Coordinator:	Kirk Seifert	W5KRK@arrl.net
Section Traffic Manager:	Marvin Peters,	KC5MP@arrl.net
Section PIC:	Daniel "Danny" Straessle,	KE5WLR @arrl.net

All leadership positions require Active Membership status. Members holding leadership positions serve at the pleasure of the appointing official.

Section Emergency Coordinator: (SEC)
Responsible for the overall AR ARES Program, establishing Section-wide goals and objectives.
Responsible for maintaining The AR ARES Emergency Communications Plan.
Manages client agency MOUs & liaison with VOAD, RACES, NWS, MARS & ADEM

Assistant Section Emergency Coordinators (All) (ASEC)
Encourage all groups of community amateurs in the assigned area of jurisdiction to establish a local emergency organization.
Facilitate the training, organization and emergency participation of District Emergency Coordinators (DECs) in the assigned area of jurisdiction.
Advise the SEC on all section emergency policy and planning, including the development of a section emergency operations plan.
Coordinate the interrelationship between local and section emergency plans and between communications networks within the assigned area of jurisdiction.

District Emergency Coordinator: (DEC)
Coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of Emergency Coordinators in your district of jurisdiction.
Make district decisions in the absence of the ASEC and SEC or through coordination with the ASEC and SEC (in that order), concerning the allotment of available amateurs and equipment during an emergency.
Coordinate the interrelationship between local emergency plans and between communications networks within your area of jurisdiction.
Act as backup for local areas without an Emergency Coordinator and assist in maintaining contact with governmental and other agencies within your area of jurisdiction.

Assistant District Emergency Coordinator (ADEC)
The Assistant District Emergency Coordinator (ADEC) may serve as a general assistant to the District Emergency Coordinator or as a specialist. That is, the ADEC may assist the District Emergency Coordinator with general leadership matters as the District Emergency Coordinator's alternate, or the ADEC may be assigned to handle a specific important function that does not fail within the scope of the duties of the District Emergency Coordinator's other assistants.

The ADEC will act as the DEC in his/her absence or in emergency response operations to maintain continuity of leadership when 24 hour activity requires multiple shifts.

Leadership Position Descriptions:

Emergency Coordinator: (EC)

Maintain and update their county's ARES plan as needed.
Work with ASEC and DEC to schedule, plan, promote, organize, and conduct drills and exercises. (Including the annual S.E.T.)
Schedule and conduct ARES nets. (AECs may perform this function).
Maintain statistical records, and submit a monthly report before the 3rd day of the month following the reporting period. Monthly reports are submitted even if you have no activity. Monthly reporting is a prerequisite to maintaining an "active" status with your appointment.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC)

The AEC may act as the EC in his/her absence or in emergency response operations to maintain continuity of leadership when 24 hour activity requires multiple shifts.

At the SEC's discretion, the AEC may be designated as the recommended successor to the incumbent Emergency Coordinator in case the Emergency Coordinator resigns or is otherwise unable to finish the term of office.

Official Emergency Station (OES):

The OES appointee is appointed to carry out specific functions and assignments designated by the appropriate EC or DEC. The OES appointee and the presiding EC or DEC, at the time of the OES appointment, will mutually develop a detailed, operational function/assignment and commitment for the new appointee. Together, they will develop a responsibility plan for the individual OES appointee that makes the best use of the individual's skills and abilities. During drills and actual emergency situations, the OES appointee will be expected to implement his/her function with professionalism and minimal supervision.

4. **Plan Activation**

If a member station determines that a true emergency situation exists, every effort should be made to notify the appropriate county EC so that information concerning an incident may be relayed through the ARES structure and formal net operations established. If the appropriate county EC is unavailable, the chain of command should be followed. This does not preclude operators from contacting an emergency dispatch center or requesting assistance for smaller incidents, such as initial fire, medical, or traffic accident calls. Then, monitor the assigned Amateur frequencies utilized in the affected area. This would include appropriate repeater output frequencies and predetermined high frequency net frequencies. If electrical service to a repeater is interrupted, stations should monitor the repeater output frequency or other predetermined simplex frequency, as directed by the local leadership. All appointed OES stations shall monitor HF and VHF net frequencies if a declaration of emergency is imminent. It is important that stations not interrupt existing emergency communications, but instead listen and only transmit if specific assistance is requested from that station or if a clear relay can be given in times of difficult copy. Stations should conform to established net protocol at all times. Deviating from established net procedure slows and confuses operations. Calls for assistance from served agencies should be routed to the appropriate EC. This will result in the most efficient and appropriate response. Only under prior arrangements should individual ARES members "self dispatch" on their own. All ARES members shall have contact information for their leadership.

5. **Training and Procedures**

An annual test of the Arkansas Section ARES will be conducted in conjunction with the National Simulated Emergency Test (SET). This test will be conducted at various levels throughout the section. It is also recommended that district or local exercises be held as determined to be appropriate and coordinated with district or local agency participation whenever possible. The ARRL has provided courses for Emergency Communications training and certification. The courses are presented in three levels. The Level-I course is highly recommended as the basic training standard for new ARES members in Arkansas. New ARES members are encouraged to complete Level-I training within one year of registration with their local ARES group. Information on Level I certification can be found at http://www.ArArrl.org. Arkansas Section leadership officials are strongly encouraged to complete Level-2 and Level-3 courses as well. Additional tests, drills, nets, and training will be carried out as directed by the individual ECs and DECs. These sessions allow tailoring of training requirements to the specific needs of the areas and served agencies. Consideration should be given to the needs of adjacent areas for maintaining a high state of (continued)

readiness for mutual aid support. It is recommended that neighboring sections be invited to participate in any exercises held on a district or section-wide basis.

Directed nets are the backbone of the ARES traffic handling operation. Directed nets operate with a net control station (NCS) which maintains order on the net. Stations not directly involved with the operation of a directed net should stand by until the net is clear. At no time will a station transmit on a directed net except when called upon by the NCS, when checking in during a non-roll call period or when a station has emergency or priority traffic. Most net operations relating to emergencies are “tactical” in nature. They are generally directed nets and messages sent can be qualified as any exchange that does not utilize an established message format or form. The NTS message format should be utilized whenever practical. Its use has a long history of reliable and accurate message exchange. ARES members should become proficient in the ARRL NTS message format and its usage. Also, good operating technique and keeping a log of your operation is of primary importance. Remember, it is the served agency’s needs that will determine what will be used in any given situation.

6. **Emergency Nets and Frequency Usage**
The following frequencies are utilized within the Arkansas Section for organized emergency nets. Contact may be attempted on these frequencies in the event that you are cut off from commercial telecommunications. Listen before transmitting! If an emergency net is in progress, do not interrupt! Monitor the frequency and follow the directions of the net control station.

HF
The Primary 80 Meter Arkansas Section Net meets every first Monday of the month, 7:00 PM, 3987.5 kHz.

Frequency	Net Name
3987.5 kHz.	Primary 80 Meter Arkansas Emergency Services Net
7280.0 kHz.	Primary 40 Meter Arkansas Emergency Services Net
7285.0 kHz.	Secondary 40 Meter Arkansas Emergency Services Net
7235.0 kHz.	Secondary 40 Meter Arkansas Emergency Services Net

Packet
Many members are active on packet. Although this system is not currently the best means of communicating across the Arkansas Section, it may be a viable method of getting low priority traffic to its destination.

HF Packet Frequencies:
80 meters WinLink: 3626.9 kHz
40 meters Winlink: 7068.9 kHz
40 meters Winlink: 7101.2 kHz Pactor 3
30 meters WinLink 10146.2 kHz
VHF Packet Frequencies:
144.390 MHz APRS
145.010 MHz Packet
145.590 MHz Packet
147.495 MHz Packet

VHF / UHF Repeater Systems
VHF or UHF repeaters serve most communities within the section. This may be a viable means of contacting a desired person or someone who can in turn contact that person for you. ARES members are strongly encouraged to obtain a listing of the available repeaters in their area BEFORE an emergency occurs. An up to date list of coordinated repeaters in the Arkansas Section is available on a website maintained by the Arkansas Section ARES (http://www.ArArrl.org). Some portions of the section are served by linked systems, which allow more widespread coverage. This may allow getting into or out of a metropolitan area to rural communities. These systems are susceptible to commercial power interruption and may not function during times of widespread or localized power outage.

When power outages occur and repeaters being utilized for emergency communications stop working, it is recommended that the output frequency of the repeater be use in 'simplex' mode along with relay stations to handle all traffic. Once the repeater system is on the air again, the transition back to repeater operation is simple. This method should be practiced whenever possible in order to understand the geographical challenges presented and for training operators in relay operations.

VHF Simplex Frequency
Use of the simplex mode minimizes exposure to power interruption, but also shortens effective communications range in most cases.

Freq MHz	Primary area of usage
146.520 FM	Statewide - PRIMARY CALL

It is also suggested to try on local repeaters frequencies if contact is not made on this frequency.

RACES:

While ARES and RACES are separate entities, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has long advocated dual membership and cooperative efforts between both groups. The best solution has been found in combining the leadership of both units. If the ARES Emergency Coordinator and the RACES Radio Officer is the same individual, all the group need do is ‘change hats’ and go on as before.

The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is part of the Field Services Division of the ARRL and is designed to support as fully as possible selected emergency response and disaster relief organizations. The ARRL has established a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU’s) between ARRL and other agencies. The current MOU’s at the national level are as follows:

American Red Cross
National Communications System
Salvation Army
Quarter Century Wireless Association, Inc.
National Weather Service
Radio Emergency Associated Communication teams (REACT)
Society of Broadcast Engineers
Civil Air Patrol
National Association of Radio and Telecommunications Engineers, Inc.
Department of Homeland Security—Citizen Corps (FEMA)
Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials—International

However, ARES does retain its own identity and organization structure, personnel and physical infrastructure while providing communications support. When dealing with served agencies, including county emergency managers, remember that ARES is itself a self-contained emergency organization that works with the served agency, not for it; that is, in partnership. The ARES infrastructure includes privately owned radios, antennas, ARES dedicated and cooperating repeaters and accessory equipment. Even more important than the equipment, the organizational structure includes numerous nets, training exercises, community support and cooperative planning with the agencies. When officials request ARES support they get the full benefit of all this, as well as the personal services of many volunteer operators, many of whom are not visible in the emergency or disaster area. At the same time, be mindful that ARES operators working in a served agency will be perceived as a part of their organization, should be governed by their dress, grooming, and behavior standards, and should be prepared to do anything within reason to assist them.

What became the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) grew out of a World War II civil defense organization of amateur operators that had been organized by the then War Department. By 1952, as the ‘cold war’ developed, it became clear that increased attention to communications was needed in a variety of civil defense applications and RACES, as it is known today, was born. Today it is recognized as one of the frameworks through which amateur radio operators would assist Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements for back-up or emergency communications as part of the National Communications System (NCS). Other frameworks utilizing amateur radio operators include the Military Affiliate Radio service (MARS) and the NCS Shared Resources program (SHARES).

RACES Units are created and administered by local, county and state civil defense/emergency management agencies. Each unit is a separate entity, and there is no hierarchy or structure of command and control between units. In short, each RACES Unit ‘belongs’ to a specific civil preparedness governmental entity. As the Part 97.407 rules make clear, RACES is intended to provide radio communications for civil-preparedness purposes only, during periods of local, regional or national civil emergencies. These emergencies are not limited to war-related activities, but can include natural disasters such as fires, floods and earthquakes. It is important to note that only emergency management officials can authorize RACES units, and appoint RACES Radio Officers (RO’s), and that this operation is strictly limited to official civil-preparedness activity in the event of an emergency communications situation.

Operator privileges in RACES are identical to those of the class of license held by the operator in the Amateur Radio Services. All of the authorized frequencies and emissions allocated to the Amateur Radio Service are also available to RACES on a shared basis, except that should the President invoke the War Powers Act, the regular Amateur Radio Services would be required to shut down and RACES stations would be allocated frequencies based on the recently revised provisions of CFR TITLE 47 part.214.