

ARRL Northern Florida Section

Section Emergency Communication Plan



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Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	5
ARRL NFL Section Alignment with NIMS.....	5
Volunteering with State and Local Government or Private Organizations.....	5
ORGANIZATION.....	6
Section Manager (SM).....	6
Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC).....	6
Section Traffic Manager (STM).....	6
Emergency Coordinator (EC).....	7
North Florida Districts.....	7
District Emergency Coordinator (DEC).....	7
COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS.....	8
Neighborhood HamWatch (NHW).....	8
SKYWARN.....	8
CIVIL AIR PATROL.....	8
SATERN.....	8
FLORIDA CERT.....	8
MARS.....	8
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES.....	9
ARES DEPLOYMENT SCENARIOS.....	9
State Requests and State Emergency Operations Center.....	9
Local (City or County) Response.....	9
In-State Response.....	9
Out-of-State Response.....	9
LEVELS OF ACTIVATION.....	9
No Alert.....	9
Level III -Monitoring Phase.....	10
Level II Partial Activation.....	10

Level I Full Scale Activation.....	10
Stand Down Phase.....	10
NET OPERATIONS	11
Message Forms	11
HF Net Operations.....	11
UHF Net Operations – Statewide	12
VHF Net Operations.....	12
Third Party Communications and Documentation	12
Mid-State Relay.....	12
Tools In The EmComm Toolbox.....	13
FM Voice (VHF / UHF).....	13
SARNet	13
SSB Voice (HF).....	13
Digital Modes	13
WinLink 2K.....	13
APRS	13
D-STAR.....	14
SEDAN.....	14
ECHOLINK.....	14
Drills and Training	15
Appendix A – Northern Florida Section Districts	16
Appendix B – Acronyms/Definitions	17
Appendix C – NTS Messaging.....	20
ARRL Message Forms	20
MESSAGE NUMBER	20
PRECEDENCE	20
HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS	21
STATION OF ORIGIN	21

CHECK.....	21
PLACE OF ORIGIN	21
TIME FILED	21
DATE	21
ADDRESSEE	22
DELIVERING STATION INFO (Optional)	22
TEXT	22
SIGNATURE	22
RECEIVED	22
SENT	22
Appendix D - NIMS ICS-213 Message Form	
FORM.....	23
INSTRUCTIONS.....	24

INTRODUCTION

This Northern Florida ARES Emergency Communications Plan is written for the local community amateur radio operator so that they may develop relationships that will best serve the communication needs of their communities in times of emergencies, utilizing the organizational advantages of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES).

The Northern Florida ARES Emergency Communications Plan provides a systematic method for amateur radio operators to voluntarily deliver supplemental radio communication services when requested by local, State and National Emergency Managers. Adherence to this Plan will provide amateur radio operators with a consistent, effective and scalable communications response under the guidance of the ARES program. ARRL membership is not necessary for participation in the ARES program, but membership is required for appointed leadership positions.

Consistent with the FEMA direction of, “All Emergencies Are Local”, this plan relegates most of the operational authority to the local level for adoption and implementation.

ARRL NFL Section Alignment with NIMS

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security sets the expectation that emergency responders organize according to a national standard making it possible for all participants to work together in all aspects of an incident. Consequently, all ARES members and leadership will adopt an emergency organization structure, minimum training standards, credentialing, and any other related standard that conforms to the NIMS guidance.

Volunteering with State and Local Government or Private Organizations

To qualify for official deployment requires you to provide your Florida Driver’s License ID number or other acceptable government issued photo ID. Deployment for emergencies under mission requests from the FDEM will not be authorized unless the amateur radio operator has voluntarily submitted the necessary information and has been cleared by that agency.

Local counties, municipalities, and other public and private served agencies may have volunteer requirements to include fingerprinting, drug testing, and other background information necessary for the safety and security under NIMS compliance standards. Those ARES members wishing to work as a volunteer in these organizations fall under the requirements those organizations set. The ARRL ARES program does not provide funding for security or background check nor does it specify what these organizations may require. The ARRL ARES Section Manager in the Northern Florida Section may remove or reject an individual at will without providing cause.

Generally, volunteers are covered for liability under the Florida Volunteer Protection Act, FSS 768.1355. The amateur radio operator should always act in a manner that is consistent with commonly accepted good practices for amateur radio operations and FCC rules and regulations, and operate in “good faith” within the scope of their duties. Acting with wanton or willful misconduct, exceeding your scope of work exempts this protection. Workers Compensation, meals, lodging and other benefits are enumerated under Volunteer Benefits, FSS 125.9504.

ORGANIZATION

The American Radio Relay League Inc. (ARRL) is a noncommercial association of radio amateurs organized for the promotion of interest in Amateur Radio communication and experimentation, for the establishment of networks to provide communication in the event of disasters or other emergencies, for the advancement of the radio art and of the public welfare, for the representation of the radio amateur in supportive matters, and for the maintenance of fraternalism and a high standard of conduct. The ARRL divides the United States and its territories into 15 geographical divisions, with 71 administrative sections, each headed by an elected Section Manager (SM). This plan provides direction for amateur radio operators located in the Northern Florida Section of the Southeastern Division.

The ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) is that part of the ARRL that utilizes the organization for voluntary emergency communication service. The ARRL Northern Florida Section Manager utilizes an appointed volunteer staff to organize the section and control operations in emergency situations through an organization. The structure of this organization is as follows.

Section Manager (SM)

An ARRL Section is the largest administrative unit of the emergency communications organization. Florida has three sections, Northern Florida, Southern Florida, and West Central Florida. The senior ARRL official is the Section Manager charged with the overall responsibility for emergency radio communication activities in the section. The SM may appoint as many ARES officials as deemed necessary to ensure responsiveness and quality of service provided. They serve at the pleasure of the SM. The following describes some of the appointments made.

Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC)

The SEC is appointed by the SM and is responsible for emergency communications operations in the NFL section. When two (2) or more sections are involved, the SEC will represent the NFL Section and coordinate activities with the other Section SECs. In the absence of the Section Manager, the SEC assumes this role.

Section Traffic Manager (STM)

The STM is appointed by the Section Manager to supervise traffic handling organization at the section level—that is, to coordinate all traffic efforts within the section, regardless of mode or National Traffic System affiliation, so that routings within the section and connections with other networks and digital traffic nodes will result in orderly and efficient traffic flow. The STM also cooperates and coordinates with the Section Emergency Coordinator so that traffic nets and emergency nets in the section present a unified public service front.

Emergency Coordinator (EC)

The EC is the key team player in ARES on the local emergency scene. Working with the Section Emergency Coordinator, the DEC if appointed, and Official Emergency Stations, the EC prepares for, and engages in management of communications needs in disasters. The EC promotes and enhances the activities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for the benefit of the public as a voluntary, non-commercial communications service. The EC serves at the pleasure of the SM.

ECs should develop a working relationship with local governmental and private agencies in the ARES jurisdictional area which need the services of ARES in emergencies. ECs should also determine the agencies that are active in the area, evaluate their needs and which ones you are capable of meeting, and then prioritize these agencies and needs. "Communications when all else fails".

- ECs shall submit a report of the previous month's activities to the SEC by day 5 of the following month
- ECs shall submit their county emergency plans to the SEC no later than October 1 annually.
- The EC shall immediately contact the DEC if appointed, or the SEC for additional resources if the communication needs exceed the ECs resources.
- ECs may appoint assistants in that county as necessary.
- ECs are required to check their email at least daily and respond appropriately when indicated.
- ECs who cannot perform their duties or have to be absent from their venue, must notify the SEC and advise who will be fulfilling the position in their absence

North Florida Districts

Districts are composed of local counties and ARES groups organized geographically in conjunction with a major city or county. Northern Florida is divided into eleven districts, each comprised of two or more contiguous counties. Each District may be headed by a District Emergency Coordinator (DEC). The Northern Florida Section District organization is identified in Appendix A of this plan.

District Emergency Coordinator (DEC)

The DECs are appointed by the Section Manager with the recommendation of the Section Emergency Coordinator. DECs are responsible for providing support and coordination of ECs in their respective district. DECs are responsible to the SEC and SM for executing the Section Plan as it applies to their district.

- The DEC shall collect ECs monthly reports, and forward these reports to the SEC by day 5 of the following month. DECs should submit a district plan (if needed) no later than October 1 annually.
- DECs shall recommend ADEC's as needed. These are section level appointed ARRL positions and require approval from the SEC and appointment by the SM.
- DECs shall coordinate training programs and assist EC's in training.
- DECs are required to check their email at least daily and respond appropriately when indicated
- DECs who cannot perform their duties or have to be absent from their venue, must notify the SEC and advise who will be fulfilling the position in their absence.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Neighborhood HamWatch (NHW)

Neighborhood HamWatch is a voluntary program for amateur radio operators who want to provide a helpful service to their neighbors during times of extended power outage. Amateur radio stations located in EOCs should recognize NHW stations as a means of relaying vital information between emergency managers and neighborhoods in the communities they serve.

SKYWARN

Amateur Radio is almost synonymous with the SKYWARN program, the "eyes and ears" of the National Weather Service during severe weather emergencies. Hams comprise the majority of SKYWARN volunteers, who report "ground truths" to local NWS offices, supplementing their sophisticated weather monitoring equipment.

CIVIL AIR PATROL

Members of ARRL and the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) share common goals of serving the public through efficient and effective use of radio communications. To this end, members of both organizations engage in regular training to prepare for emergency and disaster communications. Members of both organizations provide important communications capability to the Homeland Security programs of the United States

SATERN

The Salvation Army is particularly active in the recovery stage of disasters, and has communications needs, often filled by ARRL volunteers. SATERN is dedicated to assisting The Salvation Army during times of emergency.. SATERN is an Amateur Radio operator volunteer based organization.

FLORIDA CERT

Florida CERT members provide assistance to any government agency that requests volunteer services in any capacity. CERT Teams are often utilized by local emergency agencies for a variety of functions, such as firefighter rehab teams, special needs neighborhood canvassing, working in drills for and with emergency responders, all kinds of disaster mitigation tasks, the list goes on and on. Many CERT groups have active amateur radio units that provide communications.

MARS

The **Military Auxiliary Radio System** (MARS) is a United States Department of Defense sponsored program, established as a separately managed and operated program by the United States Army, Navy, and Air Force. The program is a civilian auxiliary consisting primarily of licensed amateur radio operators who are interested in assisting the military with communications on a local, national, and international basis as an adjunct to normal communications.

This list is not inclusive, and there may be other organizations available as local resources. These groups should be included in planning and operational consideration as recognized as partners in providing emergency communications to served agencies

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

This section contains the operational procedures for ARES operations in the Northern Florida Section. These procedures should be the baseline for all ARES operations in every District and County, in order to assure interoperability and effective mutual-aid for area-wide disaster preparation, assessment, response and recovery. This section of the plan is intended for the Amateur Radio Operator and contains details on the operational practices, procedures and methods for communicating within the ARES organization of the Northern Florida Section.

ARES DEPLOYMENT SCENARIOS

State Requests and State Emergency Operations Center

The Florida State Office of Emergency Management prefers only one contact person for Amateur Radio liaison, regardless of where in the State an incident might occur. For practical purposes, due to geographic location, this contact person is the Northern Florida Section Manager or designee. Amateur radio operators will be deployed to the FEOC only upon the EOC's request to the North Florida SM.

Local (City or County) Response

Each local ARES unit may answer local requests for emergency communication augmentation received from local government emergency managers or non-government organizations utilizing resources according to their own response plan. The responses must be reported through the SEC and SM. If the emergency escalates geographically to a scale that breaches local unit service boundaries, the SEC will coordinate the requests for additional resources.

In-State Response

When state level requests for emergency communication augmentation, the State EOC will contact the Northern Florida SM with a mission request. If the request is in the SFL or WCF Section(s), the NFL SM will contact and provide the request to the Section SM and they will in turn obtain the resources to fulfill the requests. If in the NFL Section, the SM will contact the SEC for request fulfillment.

Out-of-State Response

When national level requests for emergency communication augmentation are received by the State, the State will notify the NFL SM with a mission information request; the NFL SM will coordinate the request fulfillment with the SFL and WCF SMs and provide the State with the necessary resources to fulfill the request. ALL DEPLOYMENTS WILL BE UNDER THE STATE MISSION REQUEST SYSTEM; "FREELANCING" IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

LEVELS OF ACTIVATION

No Alert is the normal situation for Ham Radio communications. No state of alert or emergency exists. When a disaster strikes or threatens any Northern Florida community, affected ECs and DECAs may declare any of four levels of alert of their local organization:

Level III -Monitoring Phase notifies ARES operators in a specified area (such as a County or District) that their services may be needed on short notice in the next 48 – 72 hours. It may be issued by the SEC, DEC, or EC. The alert may apply to the entire Section or to specific Districts or Counties. Omission of any area does not prohibit others from taking appropriate precautionary steps. The declaration of Level III Monitoring Phase alerts ECs, Net Managers, and other key emergency communications officials to prepare for short-notice calls. All ARES personnel in the alerted Districts or Counties should monitor designated net frequencies and keep closely in touch.

ARES operators who are alerted should prepare to report to duty posts within two hours or less of being assigned. Preparations may include updating "ready-kits," arranging to take time off from work, fueling vehicles and power generators, charging batteries, obtaining stocks of expendable batteries and testing emergency-related portable equipment.

Nets operating in Level III Monitoring Phase customarily run ad hoc (i.e., they are not directed.) Radio operators and officials should monitor the appropriate frequencies for information and for possible increases in or cancellation of the alert status.

Level II Partial Activation is descriptive of operational status. It is usually issued by DECs or ECs and designates net activations, staffing requests and assignments, and other such operational functions to perform specific tasks. The alert level becomes Partial Activation in a County or District when specific duty posts are staffed and become operational, and/or a net control operator opens the net. Most emergencies, even severe ones, can be handled without ever going beyond Partially Activated.

Level I Full Scale Activation is the highest possible level of alert in an emergency communications operation. It is useful for maintaining tight control over HF circuits where heavy traffic and large numbers of stations may increase channel load on nets. When distress traffic is being handled on any emergency net or frequency, the activated level is automatically Level I Full Scale Activation and remains so until all distress traffic has been cleared.

Full Scale Activation can be declared at the Section level only by the Northern Florida Section Manager or Northern Florida Section Emergency Coordinator. Full Scale Activation is declared by issuance of a Priority bulletin to be transmitted on all active net frequencies. It applies to all nets and geographic areas designated in the formal order. A DEC can put the District on Full Scale by declaration, but the SEC or SM must be notified in advance or, if this is not possible, as soon as possible after taking the action.

The Full Scale Activation bulletin specifies the date and time the activation operation is to begin. It should designate the net or nets and/or the geographic area (County or Counties, District or Districts, Section, etc.) to which it will apply. Nets or areas NOT designated in the bulletin will continue at whatever level of alert prevailed before the Full Scale Activation.

Stand Down Phase authorizes DECs and ECs to begin the stand-down phase of the activation. Stand Down is permissive only; it does not require that operations be shut down in the specified area. It simply advises the designated DECs and/or ECs that no apparent reasons exist for continuing operation unless they have local requirements. The DEC and EC then may reduce operating hours, restrict operations or close down designated nets as the emergency passes and traffic loads subside.

Only the SM or SEC may declare a Stand Down Phase for a Section net or for a District net when more than one District is involved in the emergency operation. The DEC can declare a Stand Down Phase in the District net if the emergency operation involves the District and no Section net is in operation.

Any portion of the NFL Section Plan can be activated in support of any incident in the State of Florida and/or whenever the FLEOC is activated, and specifically when mid-state relay is necessary to support operators in other ARRL sections requiring relay to/from the FEOC.

NET OPERATIONS

Message Forms

In an effort to bridge the gap between the NTS standard ARRL message format and the NIMS ICS-213 message form, amateur operators should be very familiar with both forms. While they are similar in purpose, they are different in structure. ARES operators should realize that messages they received from Emergency Management and other EOC personnel are going to be in the NIMS ICS-213 format. It is critical that they understand not to modify the message, but to relay or deliver it as received.

However, messages received from other sources will probably be in the standard ARRL format. While this format is usually very familiar to ARES personnel, it will most likely be unfamiliar to Emergency Management officials. The ARES operator should place the ARRL-formatted message into the body section of the NIMS ICS-213 before delivering it. Thus the ARRL message remains intact, and the Emergency Management official has a document he understands. Using these procedures will enable the uninterrupted flow of message traffic, and the messages will be in a format familiar to the users and recipients

ARES members should be familiar with the NTS standard message format (See Appendix C)

HF Net Operations

The Northern Florida Section supports two major HF nets within the Section: The Northern Florida Phone Net and the Northern Florida ARES net. These nets both operate on the same 75-meter frequency, with an alternate on 40 meters.

During normal operation, these nets operate independently under the auspices of the Section Traffic Manager. Northern Florida ARES members are encouraged to join each of these nets during normal operation for training and practice in traffic handling and HF net procedures.

When an incident is declared in the Northern Florida Section, these two nets will combine, and their activation/status falls under the direction of the Section Emergency Coordinator. The combined net name will then become the Northern Florida Emergency Net.

During emergency operation, the two independent net managers will each be responsible for assigning net leadership positions for continuous net operation. The daytime (0730 to 1930 ET) portion of the net will be the responsibility of the net manager of the Northern Florida ARES Net. The nighttime portion of the net (1930 to 0730 ET) will be the responsibility of the Northern Florida Phone Net manager. This schedule will remain in effect from the initial activation of the net until the net is given the order to stand down.

The level of activation of the Northern Florida Emergency Net can range anywhere from a “frequency guard” function to a condition where only emergency traffic is accepted/passed. Operators who have not yet checked into the net are encouraged to *listen first* to determine the status of the net before transmitting. At such time as the Section Emergency Coordinator determines the net no longer is needed, he will give the order to secure, and the nets will return to their normal day to day operation.

UHF Net Operations – Statewide

The SARNet system of linked UHF repeaters along the Interstate corridors is a statewide resource. Under an emergency activation, the SARNet system will be considered a primary source of coordination for regional or statewide use – not a local county or district activation (local ARES may use it to communicate with the State EOC if required).

VHF Net Operations

VHF nets should activate per the ARES plan in the County where they operate. If there are any “stand alone” nets (not part of an ARES plan), it is the net manager’s discretion whether or not the net activates. If such nets do activate, they should have at least one station monitoring activity on the Section HF Emergency Net. This station should be available to take message traffic for the local area that is not directed to the local ARES operation.

Third Party Communications and Documentation

It is not uncommon during an incident for Emergency Management personnel to speak directly to each other via amateur radio, bypassing briefly the preferred method of written message exchanges.

In the event that Emergency Management personnel are not licensed, the amateur rules of operation have a provision (97.115) that allow a non-licensed person to utilize amateur radio. Every amateur operator on duty in an incident should be familiar with this section of Part 97 and understand the mechanics of applying this rule. In any case, such transmissions should be entered into the operator’s event log with the name/call sign of the person making the third party transmission.

Mid-State Relay

Given the size of the State of Florida and the fact there are three ARRL Sections within the State, there are times when an incident might occur and not impact the Northern Florida Section. The FLEOC will need to establish amateur communications with the Section where the incident is located, and the Northern Florida Section will need to mobilize to support such communications. MARS traffic will also be handled through the relay stations as long as there is a return route to use.

Such communications on HF may be marginal due to static, weak signals, etc. To remedy this, stations in the Central part of the State (along the I-4 corridor) will be utilized as “MID-STATE RELAY” stations. They will stand by on the chosen HF frequency to assist in communications when the Florida EOC needs direct contact with a station too weak to copy in adverse conditions. Traffic other than ARES stations such as “MARS,” faith based organizations, out of state EMA’s and recognized amateur radio organizations will be accepted by the NFL Section traffic nets.

Tools In The EmComm Toolbox

FM Voice (VHF / UHF)

FM Voice is used primarily in the VHF and UHF bands for short-distance simplex and community-wide repeater operation. This is the most widely used mode for amateurs in ARES service to local communities. All Amateurs with Technical class licenses or higher are legally able to operate on any of the FM voice frequencies and modes above 50mhz.

SARNet

The Statewide Amateur Radio Network (SARnet) is a network of linked UHF voice repeaters that serves the State of Florida. The amateur radio community can talk across the state using the same amateur radio equipment they use every day. SARNet repeaters follow the Interstate corridors (I-95, I-10, and I-75)

SSB Voice (HF)

SSB Voice mode is typically used for longer-distance communications without dependence on external connectivity (the internet or repeaters). ARES operations are typically in the 75m and 40m bands, depending on time-of-day and propagation conditions at the time of operation. Amateur General Class licenses or higher are required on this mode and on these frequencies.

Frequencies used in the North Florida Section are:

- o 7254 kHz
- o 3950 kHz

Digital Modes

The Northern Florida Section highly endorses the advancement of new technologies and modes. It is strongly recommended that all ARES members in each venue work with local clubs, independent groups and individual amateurs to establish any or all of these available modes to be used for emergency communications when needed.

Digital modes are used on all frequencies to transmit data and/or voice using digital formats which have various digital properties such as FEC (Forward Error Correction) and Checksums to insure accurate and complete transmission of data. There are currently several modes of digital transmission which are used throughout the Northern Florida Section:

WinLink 2K

WinLink 2000 (WL2K) is a system that utilizes Packet VHF/UHF and Pactor or Winmor on HF to seamlessly provide email exchange with any email address in the world WITHOUT the need for local internet connectivity. It is encouraged to have a WinLink 2K RMS station in each county or at least a digipeater to reach a neighboring RMS station in another county. Standard WL2K frequencies used throughout Northern Florida Section may be found on various websites.

APRS

This mode has been around a long time and has great potential for daily events such as parades, bike events and emergency operations. One of the advantages is the reduction of voice traffic to provide locations.

Automatic Position Reporting System (APRS) is a system which utilizes Packet VHF/UHF, D-STAR and other proprietary systems providing GPS positioning data and short texting messages to transmit location information for fixed, mobile and portable stations anywhere in the world. APRS also allows for data transmission from manual systems (keyboards) as well as automated systems such as weather stations or other data acquisition system which may give additional informational assets to emergency managers.

Using this mode can provide an Incident Commander a visual view of the location of his volunteers and a method to text message to each of them.

D-STAR

D-STAR is a digital transmission mode which is primarily focused on the 2-meter, 70-cm and 23-cm bands for voice and high speed data. This mode has significant capabilities that are of interest to ARES and the emergency management community that we serve. Specifically, the ability to transmit simultaneous voice-and-data without external interfaces and the ability to connect to another area or location such as an EOC or between local command post or venues. This mode has the ability to transmit standardized forms such as the ICS213 which is a NIMS standard. Most D-Star operation is conducted on D-Star repeaters, DV-Dongles, DVAP's and "HotSpots". 145.670 has become the primary simplex frequency just as 146.520 has been in the past for analog. There are now dedicated reflectors available for use by ARES amateurs for emergency operations in disaster areas, providing area coverage.

SEDAN

The SEDAN Network in Florida is A statewide digital messaging system, currently made up of nearly 50 nodes covering more than half the counties in the state. The network is capable of providing connections to the State Warning Point in Tallahassee from Pensacola Bay to Biscayne Bay. The statewide frequency is 145.770

ECHOLINK

A digital VOIP tool used by the FEOC and their callsign is KA4EOC. As a backup, there is a UHF repeater (443.499 +5, PL 131.8 E/D) in Tallahassee supporting Echolink node #3950.

This list is not inclusive, and there may be other modes of amateur communications available that are better suited. These modes should be included in planning and operational consideration as recognized as they may not be available during disasters in providing emergency communications to served agencies

Drills and Training

EMCOMM Training for First Responders

The governments whom we support are required by FEMA to ensure all participants, employees and volunteers, be trained in the National Incident Command System and the National Incident Management System, in order to receive reimbursement funding for the costs of recovery. Consequently, deployable individuals at the State or Local level must take these training requirements seriously.

The on-line courses listed below are appropriate for ARES members to take to obtain certificates in order to be prepared to participate in modern EMCOMMs supporting Emergency Management Authorities (EMA.) **As a minimum, all ARES members should complete ICS-100 and ICS-700** (and are encouraged to take them all). Both courses are online and free. ECs must develop and document requirements for ARES members' participation in local incidents and coordinate with the appropriate EMAs. It is highly recommended that ARES members participate in EM community exercises (national, state, local) to develop the necessary relationships, familiarization, and skills to provide quality services to our served agencies.

Members wishing to be deployed outside the home ARES county with WinLink 2000 E-mail over Ham Radio must be certified through the WL2K Certification process.

ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Courses

Main link – <http://www.arrl.org/online-courses>

Course catalogue – <http://www.arrl.org/online-course-catalog>

o Introduction to Amateur Radio Emergency Communications (EC-001)

National Incident Management System Courses

Main link – <http://training.fema.gov/is/crslist.asp>

o IS-00100 -Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS 100)

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100A.asp>

o IS-00200 -IS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (ICS 200)

o IS 00700 - National Incident Management System (NIMS) an Introduction (ICS 700)

<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700a.asp>

o IS-00800 - A National Response Plan (NRP,) an Introduction (IS 800)

<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is800b.asp>

o IS-00802 – Emergency Support Function (ESF-2) -- Communications

COM-L, COM-T, AUXCOMM Courses

These courses are offered through a variety of sources and members are encouraged to take complete them if appropriate.

Appendix A – Northern Florida Section Districts

Northern Florida ARRL Section of Districts and Counties

Capital District – Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty & Wakulla

Crown District – Duval, Jacksonville Beaches, Clay, Nassau, Putnam & St Johns

East Central District- Lake, Orange & Seminole

East Coast District – Flagler, Volusia

Panhandle District – Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson & Washington

Gulf Coast District - Bay, Gulf, Franklin

New River District - Baker, Bradford, Columbia & Union

Suwannee District – Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor

Santa Fe District - Alachua, Dixie, Gilchrist & Levy

West Central District – Citrus, Hernando, Marion & Sumter

West Panhandle District – Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa & Walton

Appendix B – Acronyms/Definitions

AEC – Assistant Emergency Coordinator.

APRS – Automatic Packet Reporting System

Communications Emergency - as defined the FCC occurs when normal communications systems are disrupted in a specified area.

County – A political subdivision of Florida; geographical jurisdiction assigned to an EC.

County Warning Point – A county public safety site, such as a Sheriff's dispatch office that functions 24 hours a day. It is a principal contact point for the State Warning Point

DEC – District Emergency Coordinator

DEM also FDEM – The Florida Division of Emergency Management

Disaster – An event that causes or may cause death or serious injury to humans, or a major loss of property.

Distress traffic – Any traffic relating to an acute, immediate threat to human safety or property; i.e., SOS, MAYDAY, or EMERGENCY traffic.

EC – Emergency Coordinator.

Email – Electronic messages exchanged over the Internet or local computer network.

Emergency – any situation in which human life or property is threatened.

Emergency Net – A group of Amateurs using the same frequency and associated frequencies to support emergency relief measures.

EOC – Emergency Operations Center

ESF – Emergency Support Function. Communications is under ESF 2.

FDEM also DEM – Florida Division of Emergency Management

FSWO – Florida State Watch Office

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

Formal Traffic - is formatted in a standard message format and transferred between two ham radio stations over Ham Radio frequencies or using electronic means such as e-mail or FAX.

GPS – Global Positioning System

HAZMAT – Hazardous Materials

Informal communications – Radio exchanges between two people not requiring verbatim relay to any third party. Classified as non-traffic, not handled on emergency nets.

Level I – Maximum level of activation in the Northern Florida ARES Plan.

Level II – Partial activation.

Level III – Monitoring Phase notice to members to prepare for deployment

MARS – Military Auxiliary Radio Station (May be Army, Navy/Marine Corps or Air Force)

NFL – Northern Florida – The Northern Florida Section of the State of Florida.

NM – Net Manager

NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NTS – National Traffic System

NWS – National Weather Service

RACES – Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

Record Traffic - Formal Traffic in which the information is sent or received on behalf of a non-ham radio licensed “third party.” Third parties include individuals, EMA’s and served agencies.

Section – Administrative unit headed by elected Section Manager (SM). Florida has three sections, Northern, Southern, and West Central.

SEC – Section Emergency Coordinator

Secondary Net – A communications channel associated with the primary emergency net used for traffic handling and other time-consuming net business.

SEOC – State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee, FL

SET – Simulated Emergency Test

SITREP – Situation Report – message reporting status of emergency related activities.

SM – Section Manager

Stand Down – Notifying status allowing officials at their discretion to shut down operations when they complete their emergency related duties.

STM – Section Traffic Manager

SWO – State Watch Office – Communications center at FDEM. Operates 24 hours a day, every day.

SWOAS – State Watch Office Amateur Station – An amateur station located at the State Watch Office in the State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee. It is activated by the SEOC Operations Officer when needed.

Tactical Traffic – Spoken instructions or consultation on the air. No third party communication occurs.

Tracking Number or Constellation Number – A number issued by the State Emergency Operations Center for each restoration activity.

Traffic – Any exchange of information between two or more Amateur Radio stations.

Traffic Log – A list of incoming and outgoing traffic at an Amateur station.

Appendix C – NTS Messaging

ARRL Message Forms

THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE RADIOGRAM VIA AMATEUR RADIO							
NUMBER	PRECEDENCE	HR	STATION OF ORIGIN	CHECK	PLACE OF ORIGIN	TIME FILED	DATE
1	R	G	K4IWW	12	CARY NC		DEC 20
TO					THIS RADIO MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT		
JOHN Q PUBLIC 1234 MAPLE AVE ANYTOWN NC 27000					AMATEUR STATION _____ PHONE _____		
TELEPHONE NUMBER 919 555 1234					NAME _____		
					STREET ADDRESS _____		
					CITY AND STATE _____		
ARRIVE	7PM	DEC	24	X			
LOOKING	FORWARD	TO	SEEING	YOU			
X	LOVE						
BETTY M PUBLIC							
REC'D	FROM	DATE	TIME	SENT	TO	DATE	TIME
<small>THIS MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, 2215 AVENUE L, WASHINGTON, DC 20038. THE RADIO MESSAGE RECEIVED IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: 1. THIS MESSAGE IS HANDLED SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LEAGUE'S COOPERATION. NO OTHER PURPOSES ARE INTENDED. 2. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES. 3. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY PRODUCT OR SERVICE. 4. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY POLITICAL OR RELIGIOUS POSITION. 5. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY PERSON OR ENTITY. 6. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY UNLAWFUL ACT. 7. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY UNLAWFUL OR UNETHICAL ACT. 8. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY UNLAWFUL OR UNETHICAL ACT. 9. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY UNLAWFUL OR UNETHICAL ACT. 10. THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PROMOTION OF ANY UNLAWFUL OR UNETHICAL ACT.</small>				<small>THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, INC., IS THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LICENSED RADIO AMATEURS AND IS A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. THE LEAGUE HAS ORGANIZED THE NATIONAL TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER NATIONAL MESSAGE CENTER. FORM: 1-1-84</small>			

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MESSAGE NUMBER

This can be any number the originating stations chooses. Most start with 1 the first of each year. Once a message is numbered, that same number remains with the message until delivered. Example: NR 1

PRECEDENCE

The Precedence of the Message determines what order the messages will be handled. The following four precedences are used in ascending order of priority:

- **ROUTINE (R on CW)**
 - 99.99% of all messages have this precedence. These messages will be handled last.
- **WELFARE (W on CW)**
 - This message is either an inquiry to the health and welfare of an individual in a disaster area or a report of the health and welfare of an individual. These messages will be handled before ROUTINE traffic.
- **PRIORITY (P on CW)**
 - These are messages have specific time limits. They are also for Official messages, not covered in the EMERGENCY category. This traffic will be handled before WELFARE or ROUTINE.
- **EMERGENCY (EMERGENCY on CW)**
 - Any message having life and death urgency to any person or group of persons, which is transmitted by Amateur Radio in the absence of regular communication facilities. When in doubt, do NOT use this precedence. This traffic will be handle first and immediately.

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

Handling Instructions are sometimes used to tell the various stations along the way, what the desires of the originating station are. If not needed, it is best not to use. On phone: the sending station would say, "HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS n", n explained below. On CW: Send HXn.

- **HXA** (Followed by a number) Collect landline delivery authorized by the by addressee within ... miles. (If no number, authorization is unlimited).
- **HXB** (Followed by a number) Cancel message if not delivered within ... hours of filing time; service originating station.
- **HXC** Report the time and date of delivery to originating station.
- **HXD** Report to the originating station the identity of the station from which you received, plus time and date. Report the identity of the station to which it was relayed, plus time and date, or if delivered report time and date of delivery.
- **HXE** Delivering station get a reply from the addressee, and originate a message back.
- **HXF** (Followed by number) Hold delivery until ... (date).
- **HXG** Delivery by mail or landline toll call not required. If toll or other expense involved, cancel message and service originating station.

STATION OF ORIGIN

This is the call sign of the Amateur Radio Station generating (originating) this message. This call sign, along with the message number, serve as the "serial number" of this message. Any future reference to this message would be: "Number nn of CALL nn4nnn".

CHECK

This is a count of the number of words used in the **TEXT** (only) of the message. Words in the address or signature are NOT counted. Groups of figures, letters, combinations of figures and letters, and "X" are counted as words. This is the method that Amateurs use to make sure that the TEXT was received without error. Both the sender and receiver should end up with the same word count (CHECK).

PLACE OF ORIGIN

This field is the City and State of either the Station of Origin or the person in the Signature. In most cases, this will be the same place.

TIME FILED

The time the message was originated. You may either use UTC or Local time. Examples: 1615Z or 1115 EST.

DATE

This is the date the message was originated. In Amateur Radio, we use month and day. The year is NOT used.

ADDRESSEE

The name(s) and address of the person to which this message is going. It looks like the address on an envelope used in snail mail. Include a phone number, if you have it. The more information here, the easier the delivery will be.

Example:

```
JOHN Q PUBLIC
1234 MAPLE AVE
ANYTOWN NC 27000
919 555 1234
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DELIVERING STATION INFO (Optional)

This section is rarely used. If the message is to be mailed or hand delivered, it is nice to put your (the delivering station) info here so the addressee can reach you if there is any question, or they want to send a return message. Most messages are delivered by phone.

TEXT

This is the message you are sending for the signature person to the addressee. It should be short (usually less than 25 words) and in telegram style. No punctuation is used. The letter "X" is used (similar to STOP in telegrams) to end one idea and start another. Many messages do not even have an "X" in them. Example

TEXT:

```
ARRIVE      7PM      DEC      24      X
LOOKING    FORWARD    TO      SEEING    YOU
      X      LOVE
```

The above TEXT has a count of 12. So the CHECK is 12. As Amateur Radio is non-commercial, the TEXT should have no commercial value. Each Radio Amateur is the judge of what is commercial and what is not.

SIGNATURE

This is the name of the person sending the message. It may be the name or call of the originating station. However, it is usually the name of a "third party", for whom the originating station is generating the message.

RECEIVED

This is for the handling station to write down whom they received the message from. This field is only for the book keeping of the handling station.

SENT

This is for the handling station to write down whom they sent the message to. This field is only for the book keeping of the handling station.

GENERAL MESSAGE (ICS 213)

1. Incident Name (Optional):		
2. To (Name and Position):		
3. From (Name and Position):		
4. Subject:	5. Date:	6. Time
7. Message:		
8. Approved by: Name: _____ Signature: _____ Position/Title: _____		
9. Reply:		
10. Replied by: Name: _____ Position/Title: _____ Signature: _____		
ICS 213	Date/Time: _____	

ICS 213 General Message

Purpose. The General Message (ICS 213) is used by the incident dispatchers to record incoming messages that cannot be orally transmitted to the intended recipients. The ICS 213 is also used by the Incident Command Post and other incident personnel to transmit messages (e.g., resource order, incident name change, other ICS coordination issues, etc.) to the Incident Communications Center for transmission via radio or telephone to the addressee. This form is used to send any message or notification to incident personnel that requires hard-copy delivery.

Preparation. The ICS 213 may be initiated by incident dispatchers and any other personnel on an incident.

Distribution. Upon completion, the ICS 213 may be delivered to the addressee and/or delivered to the Incident Communication Center for transmission.

Notes:

- The ICS 213 is a three-part form, typically using carbon paper. The sender will complete Part 1 of the form and send Parts 2 and 3 to the recipient. The recipient will complete Part 2 and return Part 3 to the sender.
- A copy of the ICS 213 should be sent to and maintained within the Documentation Unit.
- Contact information for the sender and receiver can be added for communications purposes to confirm resource orders. Refer to 213RR example (Appendix B)

Block Number	Block Title	Instructions
1	Incident Name (Optional)	Enter the name assigned to the incident. This block is optional.
2	To (Name and Position)	Enter the name and position the General Message is intended for. For all individuals, use at least the first initial and last name. For Unified Command, include agency names.
3	From (Name and Position)	Enter the name and position of the individual sending the General Message. For all individuals, use at least the first initial and last name. For Unified Command, include agency names.
4	Subject	Enter the subject of the message.
5	Date	Enter the date (month/day/year) of the message.
6	Time	Enter the time (using the 24-hour clock) of the message.
7	Message	Enter the content of the message. Try to be as concise as possible.
8	Approved by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Signature • Position/Title 	Enter the name, signature, and ICS position/title of the person approving the message.
9	Reply	The intended recipient will enter a reply to the message and return it to the originator.
10	Replied by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Position/Title • Signature • Date/Time 	Enter the name, ICS position/title, and signature of the person replying to the message. Enter date (month/day/year) and time prepared (24-hour clock).