



The Wisconsin Emergency Coordinator



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WISCONSIN SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR AND EDITOR:

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The WEC Newsletter is sent monthly to all American Radio Relay League Emergency Coordinators in the State of Wisconsin. It is intended to provide a forum for ECs to share ideas concerning the organization and training of their respective groups, and as a source of news concerning ARES activities in the state.

Comments, suggestions and articles (finished or in rough form) are solicited from the readers.

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Stan's SEC Goals

The other day, Rich Polivka (N6NKO) called to introduce himself. Rich is an ARRL Technical Specialist, living now in New Berlin, and he offered his services (you will likely see some articles by him in future newsletters). Rich asked me what my goals were as SEC, which gave me an opportunity to verbalize them for the first time. I thought you might like me to share them with you, as well, so here are my thoughts on paper.

PROVIDE GENERAL SUPPORT FOR ECs. My first priority is to

help each and every one of you to build a strong, well-trained group in your county. This is not just a platitude; the specifics are listed below with the remainder of my goal list. Also please remember that I am YOUR interface with the ARRL for ARES matters, and will do my very best to get you anything that will help you do your job.

FILL ALL POSITIONS. A strong, well-trained ARES group presupposes that there is an EC heading it. There are 72 counties in Wisconsin, but we don't have 72 ECs. Of course, some smaller counties could be combined with a neighbor and served by a single EC. Nevertheless, we are still very short of leadership. By my count, we currently have 3 District Emergency Coordinator positions unfilled, and 24 EC vacancies. Next month I will publish details, and ask your help in finding persons to fill the positions. Perhaps shuffling some of these jurisdictions is a partial answer. If so, I need guidance from YOU, because you know your area of the state better than I do. The ultimate aim is to achieve ARES coverage for all of Wisconsin so that we can quickly and efficiently integrate into the response to any emergency that arises.

INTEGRATE ARES ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT. The best way for ARES groups to serve the public is through their Emergency Management (EM) organizations. What's that, you say, you don't believe that premise? Well, I

propose to show you why it is true, and also to provide you/your group/your Emergency Management folks with guidance concerning how your ARES unit can interface with EM in your county, to the great benefit of both organizations. This guidance can be by phone, email, snailmail or in person. Want me to come visit and talk to your group? Send me a letter or email with the request and a couple of proposed dates. The group can be 2 or 20 or 200. The ARRL will pick up the tab for my travel and lodging; that is the ARRL's way of supporting your group's growth and development. Don't forget to invite your EM Director!

INSTITUTE A PROGRAM OF TRAINING IN EACH ARES GROUP. There are a number of avenues for training of ARES groups that often are neglected. Your County Emergency Management Director (federal law mandates that each county must have an EM department, so you DO have an EM Director around, even if some of you have never met them.) can develop training programs. There is also a rich menu of training programs available from the Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management in Madison. A third and important source is the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Did you know that FEMA has self-training packages, free, which you can take at home either through materials that they mail to you or, directly on-line at your computer via the internet? You bet, and they are interesting, too. I

just finished the latest one on the Incident Command System.

PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS.

One of the best ways for an ARES group to learn to communicate quickly and efficiently during emergencies is to first practice it under non-emergency conditions. A great way to practice is to provide public service communications at parades, races, runs, walks, bike-a-thons and the like. You will find tips and tricks to make this easy (and fun) in this newsletter.

ENCOURAGE PACKET RADIO USE IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.

Not into packet radio yet? Do you realize that it is the second most valuable mode of communications that we hams can provide in an emergency? Packet is second only to simplex and repeater voice communications in its value to Emergency Management during emergencies. We cannot ignore it if our goal is to provide emergency communications.

ENCOURAGE INTERACTION AND CROSS-TRAINING BETWEEN ARES GROUPS.

My OZARES group is just now beginning to develop relations with ARES groups in surrounding counties. Our new Ozaukee County EC Dave Barrow (N9UNR) has already appointed liaison designees, and some have already attended neighboring ARES meetings. He has, in the works, plans for exercises that span more than one county. What a great idea for training several ARES units to work together, so they can be prepared to do so during an area-wide emergency

Well, this is my immediate list of goals. I am sure others will develop as you provide feedback. But I surely think these are important, if I am to be of service

to you, to ARES and to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin. I'd be happy to hear what you think!

WEM EOC Hamshack Y2K Contingency Plan

[Received from Mack Brophy, N9NTB (brophm@dma.state.wi.us) in January. This is important information for each DEC and EC; please keep it handy as we approach the end of 1999.]

In the event of a National or State emergency, the following Wisconsin Emergency Management Emergency Operations Center Radio Room (Hamshack) Activation Plan will be implemented upon the request of the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management or the WEM Duty Officer.

1. The hamshack callsign is WC9AAG.
2. The hamshack will be manned by ARES\RACES\MARS volunteers. HF radio operator support for the Wisconsin National Guard will be coordinated through the WEM Communications and Warning Officer.
3. Initially HF frequency 7.277 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 1200Z thru 2400Z.
4. Initially HF frequency 3.9935 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 2400Z thru 1200Z.
5. PaCTOR will be available, as needed, on HF frequency 3.584 MHz USB.
6. VHF full time packet (wc9aag@wc9aag.en53ja.wi.us.na) MSYS BBS is available on the ARES\RACES packet net-

work frequency 145.610 MHz. Node is ARWEM.

7. VHF voice will be on the Madison Area Repeater Association 147.150 MHz (PL 123.0) repeater, linked (if needed) to the Milwaukee MAARS 145.130 MHz (PL 127.3) repeater.
8. UHF\6M voice will be on the Southern Wisconsin Repeater Group (443.400\443.675\53.090) and the UHF Backbone Network.
9. Emergency bulletins, frequency updates, situation reports, etc., will be disseminated using the Badger Emergency Net (BEN) on 3.985 MHz LSB, if it is activated.
10. E-mail will be utilized, when available. Hamshack e-mail address: races@dma.state.wi.us.
11. The hamshack telephone number is 1-608-242-3323 (with voice mail), if operational.
12. HF voice frequencies will be adjusted for changing band conditions.
13. For additional RACES information, contact the State RACES Officer William Kimble, WA9OAY, at 1-920-261-7107.
14. For additional ARES information, contact the WI ARRL SEC Dr. Stanley Kaplan, WB9RQR, e-mail: skaplan@mcw.edu or phone: 1-414-284-9346.
15. For general WEM EOC hamshack information, send an inquiry to the hamshack e-mail address or call the hamshack telephone number. Check the WEM internet web page at <http://badger.state.wi.us/wem>

.wi.us/agencies/dma/wem/index.htm.

16. Air Force MARS point of contact is Phillip Rebensburg, AFA3FM\AFF3WIKC9CI, e-mail: phillipr@execpc.com; phone: 1-414-251-6250.
17. Army MARS point of contact is Gustov Bonow, AAR5BS\W9IHW, e-mail: bmsmarswi@wctc.net, phone: 1-715-887-3962.
18. WEM point of contact is Alan Wohlferd, Communications and Warning Officer, e-mail: wohlfa@dma.state.wi.us or phone: 1-608-242-3250.

(Current as of 11 Jan 99)

How To Organize And Run Communications For A Public Service Event

-by Frank J. Piper, KI8GW

[Frank is AEC and Event Manager for Central Ohio ARES (Franklin County, Ohio). Reprinted with permission from the December 1998 issue of WorldRadio (edited slightly from the original article) and we extend our thanks to WorldRadio for its helpful and generous reprint policy. This is an excellent set of guidelines for any Amateur Radio group to follow when they work public service events.]

It's no secret that emergency and public service communications are the main reasons Amateur Radio exists. From natural disasters to a community event, Amateur Radio can play an important role in logistics and public safety.

It's also common sense to the Amateur Radio operator that before going to work in a public service event, one needs to go through a checklist of equipment: Are the batteries charged? Do I have the proper antenna? Where is that speaker mike anyway? Do I need a headset?

But, before we go headfirst into an event, do we have a PLAN? I often picture a group of amateur operators riding over the horizon, with HTs strapped to their belts like six-shooters, marching up to the people in charge, and saying "Howdy, hear ya need some communicators, where do ya want us?" Then watch the group fiddle for about 20 minutes figuring who is going where, if they need to use a repeater, and then finding out not everyone can operate on the same band. Lack of planning makes us look ill prepared, and this non-preparedness shows.

Our ARES group has worked a total of seventy-six (76) public service events and drills in the last year, along with assisting the Red Cross with emergency communications during the flooding of Southern Ohio in the spring of '97. Some of the events covered by us were the Scioto River Valley Bike Tour, the Columbus Marathon, and the 1997 Port Columbus Airport Disaster Drill. With this typical schedule each year, one can see why we make planning just as important as charged HT battery packs.

We have developed a set of guidelines that can be used on any public service event, from a 5K Run to a two-day bike tour, to a full-blown marathon. We would like to share these with the rest of the amateur community.

ASSIGN A COORDINATOR

Our group worked 76 events last year, but we did not punish one person with the burden of

organizing everything. Try to find someone who is familiar with the event being worked (i.e., if it is a bike tour, see if someone in your group is active in cycling, which will make their assignment interesting.). The coordinator will be the "face" person for your group, and will meet and work directly with the director of the event,

MEET THE ORGANIZERS AND GET DETAILS

Confirm day, time, and location. Remember that some directors may have never worked with Amateur Radio before. Give them a thorough explanation of what Amateur Radio is, and how we can help them. Focus on logistic support, and participant safety. Obtain a map or layout of the event, and ask the director what areas would they like to have communication coverage. Will there be medical coverage? What type of reports do the organizers want during the event? If it's a race, they may want numbers of the leaders, or the times as they pass a mile mark. Will you need to provide an "open mike" so mile timers can get synchronized starts from the gun? The more you know what is expected of your group, the better you can plan ahead!

GET WITH YOUR GROUP AND PLAN

From your details above, determine the number of communicators required and decide who will be the Net Control Station (NCS). Our group always runs formal directed nets, so an NCS is always necessary. Will there need to be more than one Net (i.e. General Event Net, Administrative Net, Medical Net)? The NCS should have some experience in the type of event being worked, if possible. Always have someone monitoring at their home in case phone calls need to be made, or have an on-site cell

phone available. Make sure the NCS has a "plot board" available for use.

VISIT THE SITE AHEAD OF TIME

At least ten to twelve days prior to the event go out and do a physical survey of the area to be worked. Look for possible traffic, terrain, or confusing trouble spots. Take a fellow amateur and place them where the Net Control Station will be, and then travel to each place where a communicator will be. This will help determine if simplex operation will work, or if a repeater is required. Unless your group has its own repeater, you may need to approach a local club who has a machine. Explain to them that you are providing a needed public service. Most clubs will not object, and may even be able to provide some volunteers!

DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION TO YOUR TEAM

Use a personal contact or packet message a week before the event to confirm details needed for the event. The packet should consist of a note explaining the event, including a meeting point, a map if appropriate; a chart showing the other communicators times to be "on-station", and projected dismissal time. It is a good idea to also include the phone number of the coordinator in case the communicator cannot attend. Backup communicators are always a good policy; it is better to have too many than too few. Never tell communicators that they are not needed!

THE BIG DAY

The event coordinator should be on location earlier than anyone else to touch base with the event organizers to see if there are any last minute changes. Be professional. After all you are a diplomat of the Amateur Radio Service! Be sure your NCS is aware of all requirements the

organizers are asking for. Run your nets formal and directed.

DEBRIEF AND DOCUMENT YOUR EVENT

If the event organizers hold a critique meeting and you are invited to attend, try to be there or send a representative from your group. Write up a report to give to your group, or publish in your newsletter, if applicable. The write up should include a list of communicators, a description of the event, unusual weather conditions, problems and solutions and any special requests from the event organizers. These reports will aid you and others when the event is held again, if you are asked to help. Our group publishes a monthly bulletin, which consists of such reports.

We follow this same procedure for each of our public service events, with fantastic results. Of course, we realize that an actual emergency situation is quite different from a planned public service event. During a real emergency you do not have the luxury of pre-event meetings and weeks to plan ahead. But, if you work your public service events using our guidelines, you will start to see improvements in the efficiency of your communicators and in the capability of the equipment they use, as well as improvements in the expertise of your net controllers. You need these capabilities in your back pocket when called upon by your community to provide emergency communications. Then you and your team can ride over the horizon, with HTs strapped to your belts, march up and say, "We're Amateur Radio operators, how can we help?" 73!

GOOD PEOPLE HELP, CAUSE HELP CAN'T WAIT.

1999 Weather Spotters Classes

[From the January 1999 issue of the WEM Digest, issues and events for Wisconsin's Emergency Management Community.]

The following listing is the scheduled February and March weather spotter classes conducted by the National Weather Service. Contact your NWS office or county emergency management director for time and location of event.

Feb.24	Jackson County
Feb.25	Ozaukee County
Feb.27	Dane County
Mar. 1	Lafayette County
Mar.2	Green County
Mar. 3	Green County
Mar. 4	Iowa County
Mar. 8	Walworth County
Mar. 9	Sheboygan County
Mar.10	Fond du Lac County
Mar.10	Trempealeau County
Mar.11	Green Lake County.
Mar.16	Columbia County
Mar.17	Sauk County
Mar.18	Marquette County

Governor to Declare Amateur Radio Operator Recognition Day

Plans are underway for Governor Tommy G. Thompson to declare 1999-04-22 as Amateur Radio Operator Recognition Day, to identify our role in providing emergency and public service communications services to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin. Both ARES and RACES are mentioned in the declaration. The signing ceremony is scheduled to be held in Madison, 1999-03-10.