The Wisconsin ARES/RACES

Emergency Coordinator

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The Anderson Powerpole: A Statewide Standard

The time has come to declare the Anderson Powerpole as a statewide standard for all ARES/RACES groups. The advantages are overwhelming. Clearly, someone has built a better mousetrap.

You don't remember what it is? See the article in the July 2001 issue of this publication for details. You lost your paper copy? All back issues are available for downloading on our website. The URL is printed in the masthead.

Soldered or crimped – your choice. Either will work with the connectors as manufactured. Current capability is 15 or 30 amps. Durable polycarbonate plastic housings that are color coded (red/black) make it difficult to plug the wrong wires together. Stainless steel contacts ensure corrosion-free matings. The design is genderless (a connector on one wire is exactly the same as the connector on the other wire that it plugs into). There are even clamp receptacles that permit panel mounting. You can mate a black and a red plug side-by-side to make a single, two-wire connector. You can even do a side-by-side and top-bottom arrangement to mate four wires. In other words, you can build your own 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or even more monolithic plug and socket combination. Or, you can leave them free.

All ARES/RACES units are encouraged to begin switching over to the Powerpole connectors for all 12v DC supplied rigs. Typically, you will need four connectors for a rig – two blacks and two reds. Cut the 12v DC supply lines and insert two black connectors on the black wire, and two reds on the red wire. Be sure to make the cut **after** the fuse, so the fuse cannot be disconnected from the rig. When finished, your rig will mate with any 12v DC supply using the same connectors.

One caution. If you mate the connectors side-by-side, do it according to the diagram below.
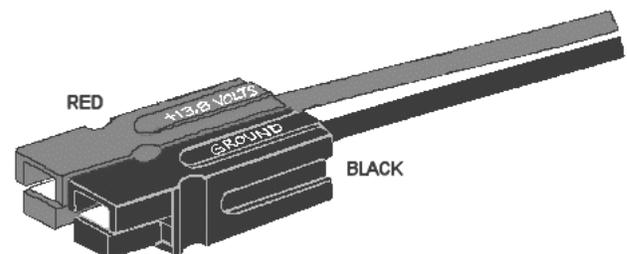
Facing the contact side head-on (opposite the wire side), metal tongues go down, red on the left and black on the right. Start switching over!

What do you say?

By Dennis Rybicke, K9LGU, STM

When handling traffic with the voice mode, there are some ways to facilitate the process. Generally, when you check into a voice traffic net, you give the call of the NCS, listen, and then give your call followed by

the word "traffic," if you have some. The net control will ask you to list your traffic when you are recognized, and you will say how many messages and the name of the city of destination.

Let's say you have four pieces of traffic, so you list them this way. "Two - Milwaukee, one - Green Bay, one – through" (going to a higher level of the NTS to go out of state). The net control will acknowledge your list.

When you are directed to send your messages, the NCS will probably say, "Your Call, move to (a nearby frequency) and send your two Milwaukee to W9YCV" (or some other stalwart traffic handler in the Milwaukee area). You will go to the frequency and listen for the receiving station. You don't call first, since the receiver has to find a clear spot in which to copy your traffic. When you are called, you respond to see if the station hears you okay and is ready to copy. You'd say, "W9YCV, this is _____. Are you ready to copy?" (There is no sense in sending a bunch, only to realize that it is not being received.) Your receiving station tells you to go ahead, so you start. In the preamble, it is not necessary to label the parts. It's customary to say "number" before the message number, but, after that, the receiver already knows what's coming next, so you can just say the precedence, handling instructions, station of origin, check, place of origin, and date without saying the words, "precedence, handling instructions, station of origin", and so on. That is why we have a message format; it saves time.

A well-adjusted VOX can let the receiving station interrupt you and ask for repeats as you go along, or you can just pause briefly after the preamble, addressee, and text.

As you send the addressee and address, be methodical. Pace yourself. Spell out difficult names or streets. Say the telephone number in three parts, 920 (pause) 563 (pause) 1421. Between the address and the text, say the word, "Break." This tells the receiving station that you are starting the next part of the message. It's also a good time to stand by in case the receiving operator needs any fills thus far, but don't anticipate a response. If you don't hear anything, go ahead with the text. Here's where labels sometimes help. If you are going to say a letter group that is not an actual word, you can label it as "letter group" before you say it. This also works for number groups and mixed groups (those with numbers and letters). Spell out difficult words. If there are ARRL numbered messages in the text, they are always spelled out. It's "ARL SIXTY NINE" not "ARL 69." At the end of the text, say the word, "Break" again to indicate you are changing to the next section of the message, the signature. After the signature, you would say, "End, one to follow." This means it's

the end of this message but you have one more for Milwaukee. If you do not have another, you'd say, "End, no more." Next time we'll explore what the receiving station might say.

Please Don't Send Me Your Roster – Update the One I Send You

From time to time, an EC will send me a copy of their local roster, in one format or another, expecting me to update the state RACES roster for their county from it. That doesn't work at all for your SEC, and here is why.

That would require me to sit down and compare the call, name, address, city, state, zip, phone number and class of license for each and every member in your local group. With changes coming in at the rate they do (1,300 hams and nearly 80 groups statewide), I would need to spend at least two to three full days a week just updating the RACES roster. While it is true that I am retired, I still go to the medical school one day per week, and work elsewhere another. That would mean that I have no or only one day a week free to take care of other SEC business. Not enough, if I am to be proactive. For example, currently I am developing statewide interaction with the hospital council (more on that later), plus there are a myriad of other SEC/RO duties.

So, how can it be done? I will mail you a copy of your unit's roster for updating. Simply compare what is on that roster with your local records. If a ham should be deleted, line them out and so note. If a phone number or class of license needs correction, pen it in clearly. If additions need to be made, write them on the back. Mail me the edited copy in the SASE I provide you. I will update the RACES roster promptly on receipt, and mail you an updated version for your records.

Once you have done that, keeping current is really easy. You can email minor corrections, additions or deletions to me at any time. Or jot a note and snail-mail it to me. You can even call corrections in if you wish. Whenever I change your RACES roster in any way, I will always print a copy of the new version and mail it to you.

You don't need to use the RACES roster as your local roster. For example, many ECs keep their member's email addresses in their local rosters, but this data is not part of the RACES roster. By all means, keep whatever local records suit you. All that I ask is that you keep what data is in the RACES roster up to date at all times. It is important for Wisconsin Emergency Management, for Wisconsin ARES and for you. The state RACES roster is not just a tabulation

of Wisconsin hams involved in emergency communications, though that is important, too. It is also a potential contact instrument in widespread emergencies, and a legal instrument. Please help me to keep it up to date and accurate. Thanks!

Heat Wave Criteria

By Rusty Kapela, NWS Milwaukee/Sullivan

[From an email message by Rusty, dated 2May. Edited.]

We've made a revision to our heat wave criteria. Mainly, we dropped the "Heat Watch" idea (but we will still have the "Excessive Heat Watch"). Below are the definitions and criteria that will be used for the upcoming 2002 summer season, but only for the 20 counties in south central and southeast Wisconsin served by the Milwaukee/Sullivan Weather Forecast Office: See the last paragraph below for the remainder of the state.

OUTLOOK STATEMENT: Issued 2- 4 days prior to time that minimal Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning conditions are expected. Serves as a long-term "heads-up" message.

EXCESSIVE HEAT WATCH: Issued 24-48 hours in advance when Excessive Heat Warning conditions are expected.

HEAT ADVISORY: Issued 6-24 hours in advance of any 24-hour period in which daytime heat indices (HI) are expected to be 105-110 for 3 hours or more, and nighttime HI's >= 80. Advisories are issued for less serious conditions that cause significant inconvenience and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to situations that may threaten life.

EXCESSIVE HEAT WARNING: Issued 6-24 hours in advance of any 24-hour period in which daytime heat indices (HI) are expected to exceed 110 for 3 hours or more, and nighttime HI's >= 80. Warnings are issued for weather conditions posing a threat to life.

For the remainder of Wisconsin:

1) The criteria for the long-range Outlook Statement, and Excessive Heat Watch are the same as those for the Milwaukee/Sullivan office.

2) The trigger for a Heat Advisory is when HI's will be in the 105-114 range for 3 hours or more during the daytime, and nighttime HI's => 80, for any 24-hour period.

3) The trigger for an Excessive Heat Warning is when HI's will equal or exceed 115 for 3 hours or more during the daytime, and nighttime HI's >= 80, for any 24-hour period.

AN APPROACH TO SERVED AGENCIES

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[From the ACS Newsletter, 25Mar02, Ken Bourne, W6HK, editor. This article was second in a series, originally titled Self Activation, addressing the issue of self-activation by units in California. While that aspect does not really apply to us since ECs can self-activate whenever an emergency arises, there is a strong message in the last two paragraphs that most certainly applies to how we interact with Emergency Management and other served agencies. Take a look; it may suggest a helpful approach. Stan]

Why officials deny any form of self-activation varies. It can be from a lack of trust of the unit leaders, a desire to enforce control no matter what, an inability to see benefits that can be derived, or policy from higher up in the government.

Can that be changed to provide for some realistic form or type of self-activation? If it is just to satisfy unit participants, the answer often is no. But if to truly assist a government agency the unit serves, it often can be altered in a way customized to the specific officials. It is a matter of finding a "benefit" and successfully communicating that at an "I want it level" to where the official reaches out and grasps that which is then "wanted."

In almost any course on management, marketing, and sales, the consistent underlying theme is that people migrate towards and acquire things (physical or mental) that they "want." Hence the clue is to create the "want" in their mind to where the idea of "possessing it" is theirs, not yours. Sometimes that takes very creative thinking to accomplish. If you want examples, just turn on your television, turn down the sound, and watch the commercials and movies ads and see which ones you are tempted to turn the sound back on to find out more about the message in the advertisement.

Sometimes the way to get a form of "self-activation" is for an astute lead officer (of an EMCOMM unit) to just go into the agency more often in NON-emergency situations and keep his eyes open. This helps to develop familiarity and sets the way for him to be there in a future emergency just by showing up. You can defuse the situation months beforehand in seemingly unrelated ways. In one situation, the unit lead officer noticed that cartons had been stacked in a new office for several weeks. He commented on it to an administrative assistant who said they haven't been able to get them assembled. He asked if one of the volunteers might take care of it. With a grateful "yes" response, it was done. While not "communications" in the sense that we think of it, it was a powerful interpersonal message that said, "I see a problem I can solve for you," and presented a solution. The point is that there are side doors that are more productive than trying to crash the front or back door. It can lead to the officer just showing up again and again and

becoming comfortable to the paid staff, and, before you know it, he is "self-activated" on every emergency because his "comfort level" is WANTED (albeit unconsciously) by someone on the paid staff. A saying that comes to mind is "comfortable as an old shoe." I recall a situation where, just as I entered such an office, I heard one paid-staffer say to another that (such an officer) was "the best thing that ever happened to the agency." Obviously, he (or she) has to convert that relationship to the unit and its communications abilities. But, that is another subject.

Special Events Manual

Did you know you can get the ARRL Special Events Communications Manual on the web at ARRL HQ? Yep, it is posted there at the following specific address:

http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/spevman/index.html

The manual has been recently rewritten by editor Steve Ewald, WV1X, and contains:

CHAP	TITLE
1	Introduction
2	Working with Event Sponsors and Public Safety Officials
3	Working with Volunteers
4	'Athon and Parade Communications
5	Boat Racing Communications
6	"Is it Legal?"
7	Public Displays and Demonstrations

You can read it on line. On the other hand, you can print it (click the "*Text only – printable*" button first). Alternatively, you can contact me and I will send you a copy that I captured, formatted, and converted to a 65kb Adobe Acrobat file. When printed, the .pdf file is 19 pages long.

There are good pointers in the document. It is well worth the effort to get a copy

Universal ID Cards for ARES/RACES Hams: A Status Report

Your SEC has been following a web-based discussion by SECs from all over the country concerning ID cards. Should we have a national ID card for all ARES/RACES ops? Should there be a statewide card? Or should there be just a local card? The pros and cons have been going back and forth on all sides of the issues (for there are, indeed, multiple issues involved). It is a difficult topic because opinions vary and the practical aspects of a national or statewide card would involve a momentous effort and would be very costly. Several of the SECs who are also very high up in state and even federal law enforcement or other first responder professions, and who also possess wide experience in emergency incidents at every level, seem to stand out with their clarity and balanced judgment on the issues. I will try to paraphrase the focus of their opinions for you, as briefly as possible.

A national card will not work. Aside from the huge cost and effort in providing one, they still will not be accepted during local incidents. Why? First, they can be faked, like any document can, and local law enforcement officials know it. Second, the legal responsibility for responding to a local (city, county) incident lies with the local responders, and a national ID will simply not get you into a command post if the local sheriff has told his deputies not to pass anyone without a uniform. From a responder's point of view, that is exactly as it should be.

In large part, the same is true for a state ID. Local responders want to see local ID. Better yet, they want you to be identified by a law enforcement or Emergency Management official who knows you. On top of that, most deputies that you flash a federal or state ID for will never have seen one before, and they will not trust it. On the other hand, if you have a local Emergency Management/Amateur Radio Operator ID card (as quite a few Wisconsin counties do), and if your Emergency Manager has had the forethought to provide a sample copy to the sheriff so that it can be displayed and discussed at roll call, a deputy is likely to recognize it and at least facilitate checking to see if you can go where you think you need to be.

Perhaps this situation will change in future, and a national or statewide card will be worth the effort needed to issue one to all ARES/RACES folks. Right now, the best minds feel that this is not the case. It is simply not worth pursuing because the cost/benefit ratio is not favorable. We are not just talking about the dollars, either. It won't do the job.

For now, the best approach is at the county level. Just as you ECs manage the best possible ham emergency communications response at the county level, the best identification mechanism is also at the county level. Quite a few units in our state have designed a card, in concert with their Emergency Manager, and the photo ID is even signed by that official. At the very least, you can use the standard issue ARES card, with photo attached, and perhaps your Emergency Manager's signature across the front. On the other hand, if you would like to design a custom card for your group and need help, your SEC will be glad to work with you. If you can provide a digital copy of your county's logo (with your Emergency Manager's permission), we could even work that into the design. Just let me know.