



Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Emergency Communications Plan

Tyler County, Texas

February 2017



I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Tyler County Amateur Radio Emergency Service (Tyler County ARES) is a field organization of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Membership is administered but not limited through the Tyler County Amateur Radio Association (TCARA). It is composed of FCC licensed amateur radio operators who are trained emergency communicators, volunteering their personal time, skill and equipment, to serve in the public interest. Tyler County ARES is focused on providing service to Tyler County, Texas. Individuals must hold a current FCC Amateur Radio License to become an ARES member. Persons not licensed Amateur Radio Operators may participate in ARES activities but cannot become ARES members until they become licensed Amateur Radio Operators. Amateur Radio operators living within or near Tyler County are eligible for participation with Tyler County ARES.

1.2 Under Federal regulations, Amateur Radio public service communications are furnished without compensation of any kind.

1.3 The Tyler County ARES functions in this Emergency Communications Plan under the direction of the ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC), District Emergency Coordinator (DEC), and the Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC). The EC is appointed by Section Manager (SM), SEC and the DEC for the South Texas Section of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), and depends upon the support of local Amateur Radio Operators and Amateur Radio clubs.

1.4 When activated, the EC or Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) performing the activation will become the ARES Officer In Charge (OIC), or will designate an OIC. The OIC will be the final authority within Tyler County ARES for that emergency incident or public service event.

1.5 The EC may appoint Assistant ECs, (AECs) as needed for the ARES to function efficiently.

II. PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this plan is to provide a written guide containing the minimum information that would be needed in an emergency. This plan will provide a framework to address emergencies and will serve as the official Tyler County Texas ARES Emergency Communications Plan. Each emergency is different. Flexibility to provide adequate response and support is a necessity.

2.2 The primary responsibility of the Tyler County ARES is to furnish communications in the event of a disaster or an incident when regular communications fail or are inadequate.

2.3 All drills, training and instruction shall be carried out to ensure readiness to respond quickly in providing effective amateur emergency communications whenever an occasion may arise.

2.4 The following agencies could be served during a communications emergency: Emergency Management, American Red Cross; Hospitals; Fire Departments; Police Departments; Sheriff's Departments; National Weather Service; and any other agencies requesting assistance from the Tyler County ARES.

2.5 The DEC or EC may at their discretion make modifications to this plan to ensure the plan continues to meet or exceed operational needs and requirements of the Tyler County ARES.

III. ACTIVATING THE PLAN

3.1 Any member of the Tyler County ARES who becomes aware that a communications emergency exists, should contact the EC or an AEC, then monitor the WD5TYL Repeater, frequency of 147.220, positive offset, pl tone 100, for activity. Backup frequency is 146.560 FM simplex.

3.2 Tyler County ARES members are prohibited from going to the site of any emergency incident unless authorized to do so by Net Control. Net Control will only authorize operators to go to the site of an emergency incident if the appropriate served agency requests ARES help at that site. The request, requester name, title, served agency, and time should be documented in the net log.

3.3 The EC or Assistant EC shall be notified by telephone or pager. Other methods, including amateur radio or courier may be used if needed.

3.4 In any emergency in which Amateur Radio is requested to serve, Amateur Radio operators may be alerted by any emergency management coordinator, Red Cross, or state official notifying the EC or Assistant EC. When AECs are notified, they will periodically attempt to contact the EC until successful. The EC or AEC who activates ARES will become the ARES Officer In Charge (OIC). The ARES OIC will document the name, title, and served agency of the requester.

3.5 The ARES OIC will be in charge of all ARES operations during any emergency activation. He/she will be the top Tyler County ARES authority for the event. All ARES participants will take direction from him/her. The OIC may change during the event at the discretion of the OIC or EC.

IV. ARES MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE

4.1 If telephone service is available, the OIC or designee will notify its members by activating the telephone tree.

4.2 Upon the awareness or notification that a communications emergency exists, members of the Tyler County ARES will call into the Tyler County ARES Emergency Net on the WD5TYL Repeater, 147.220, positive offset, pl tone 100 with 146.560 FM simplex as an alternate frequency. The KF5YDH Repeater, 145.250, negative offset, pl tone 123, located in Chester, Texas, will serve as the backup repeater in the event the WD5TYL Repeater is inoperable.

4.3 If required to accomplish necessary staffing for the emergency, the OIC, or designee, will transmit on each VHF 144-148 MHz to include designated amateur club frequencies, in the Tyler County ARES area advising all stations of the ARES activation. Internet e-mail may also be used, but only after all other methods have been unsuccessful.

4.4 Mobile units are activated and dispatched.

4.5 The EC/AEC will assume net control or delegate another station as net control station (NCS). This station is designated as a "Key Station" and will be extensively utilized during a communication emergency. Key stations have full emergency power capability with relief operators assigned to ensure continuous operation.

4.6 Upon notification that a communications emergency exists, members of the Tyler County Amateur Radio Emergency Service will listen to the frequency and will only check in if they have urgent information or when the Net Control Station (NCS) asks for check-ins on the Tyler County ARES Emergency Net. Stations will maintain radio silence unless they have business with the net.

V. DUTIES OF NET CONTROL STATION - NCS

5.1 OPENING NETS - The Tyler County Emergency Net will be activated by the Net Control Station upon instructions from the OIC. The Tyler County ARES Emergency Net will be called to order by the NCS. Based upon the facts, stations will be fully advised as to the nature of the emergency. Net Control will establish and announce backup frequencies and a backup Net Control station. As appropriate, Net Control will periodically announce that a net is in progress, give brief summaries, and remind users of backup frequencies and backup Net Control, etc.

5.2 Members of the Tyler County ARES are checked into the net from their mobiles and home stations to await for further instructions.

5.3 Liaison stations to the National Traffic System nets will be assigned as needed. Instructions will be provided by the OIC.

5.4 Mobiles or portables are dispatched as needed to the Tyler County Emergency Operations Center, Tyler County Chapter American Red Cross Headquarters, Hospital, Shelters and other agencies as required.

5.5 Operators of home stations not on emergency power are coordinated to effectively operate the "Key Stations" as required.

5.6 Net Control will compile and maintain an inventory list of operators checking into the Net and their equipment for possible assignment.

5.7 Net Control will maintain an activity log listing assignments and duties on form ICS-214.

VI. OPERATIONS

6.1 All written messages will be taken utilizing the ICS-213 standard form unless otherwise specified by the OIC.

6.2 All messages must be signed by the official who originates them, with his title, taking responsibility for their contents.

6.3 Message precedence of EMERGENCY, Priority, Welfare and Routine, as defined on ARRL Form FSD-3, shall be used on all messages.

6.4 Messages received requesting materials or services, when received are known to later require payment or repayment of funds will not be transmitted until they contain the printed name, title, served agency and site of the requester.

6.5 All operators must retain a copy of all formal messages.

6.6 Stations must not transmit unless invited to do so by net control. The only exception to this procedure is for a station having emergency traffic. **EMERGENCY TRAFFIC ALWAYS HAS PRIORITY.**

VII. DEMOBILIZATION

7.1 The OIC shall be the final authority for demobilization following an emergency incident or net.

7.2 Stations shall keep Net Control informed when they have been released from any assignments. They shall report the name and title of the person releasing them and the served agency name to Net Control.

7.3 Net Control will enter the message details in the net log.

7.4 Released stations should identify their availability for additional assignments and continue to monitor the assigned frequency.

VIII. TRAINING, DRILLS, TESTS AND ALERTS

8.1 An annual test will be conducted during the Fall of each year in conjunction with the nationwide Simulated Emergency Test (SET) sponsored by the ARRL. Periodic exercises will be conducted in cooperation with local emergency management coordinators or as determined by the EC.

8.2 A training net will be held for the membership beginning at 7:00 p.m. local time each Monday on the WD5TYL Repeater 147.220, positive offset, pl tone 100, or other designated frequency.

8.3 At the discretion of the EC, Tyler County ARES will sponsor an unannounced activation at least once a year.

8.4 A Standard Operating Procedure detailing the emergency response procedures and actions in support of this plan shall be written and routinely tested.

8.5 The Tyler County ARES Communications Plan and the Standard Operating Procedures shall be reviewed during February of each year to keep the plan and SOP current and viable.

8.6 The Tyler County ARES may regularly supply public safety communications in conjunction with local events.

IX. DEFINITIONS

9.1 ARES – Amateur Radio Emergency Service – a voluntary field organization of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). It is composed of FCC licensed amateur radio operators who are trained emergency communicators, volunteering their personal time, skill and equipment, to serve in the public interest, with neither pecuniary interest nor compensation.

9.2 ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC) – Amateur Radio Operator appointed by the ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator and District Emergency Coordinator to perform the duties of the ARES Emergency Coordinator. ARES Emergency Coordinator must hold a valid FCC Amateur Radio Operator's License of Technician Class or higher and be a member of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL).

9.4 ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Amateur Radio Operator appointed by the ARES Emergency Coordinator to serve in a leadership role as an assistant to the ARES Emergency Coordinator. ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator must hold a valid FCC Amateur Radio Operator's License of Technician Class or higher.

9.5 Emergency – any immediate threat to life or property.

9.6 Incident – any communications emergency that occurs without notice.

9.7 Officer In Charge (OIC) – Tyler County Emergency Coordinator (EC), Assistant Tyler County Emergency Coordinator (AEC) or designee responsible for all operations when the organization is activated for an incident or public service event.

9.8 Public Service Event – a pre-planned activity for a non-profit organization used to provide communication services and as a training experience for ARES members. Examples include a parade and fun run.

9.6 TCARA (TCARA) -Tyler County Amateur Radio Association is a non-profit organization of FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operators and associated members

interested the Amateur Radio hobby and public service. The TCARA serves as a resource for ARES operators in Tyler County.

9.7 Net Control Station (NCS) - is the station designated by the EC or AEC as the primary station to provide support as needed to the emergency effort.

