

LICKING COUNTY, OHIO

A.R.E.S.

(Amateur Radio Emergency Service)

Emergency Communications Plan



Emergency Communications Plan

1. SCOPE

1.1 This document applies only to the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) operating under the auspices of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) in Licking County Ohio.

1.2 If any action requested by a served agency involves risk and is beyond the scope of the anticipated assignment, the person should NOT take the action and should notify net control that he/she will not be performing the action requested, along with a statement of the risk assessment.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Licking County ARES is a field organization of the ARRL and is composed of FCC licensed amateur radio operators who are trained emergency communicators, and volunteer personal time, skill and equipment to serve in the public interest. The Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) mission is to provide RELIABLE and COORDINATED EMERGENCY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS for served agencies at their request and on a voluntary basis. This plan is written in conformity with the [ARRL Ohio Section Emergency Response Plan](#). It details the ARES emergency communications operations in Licking County in support of that plan, and other ARRL operational plans and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between served agencies.

2.2 The Licking County ARES functions in this Emergency Communications Plan are under the direction of the ARES Licking County Emergency Coordinator (EC). The EC is appointed by the Ohio Section Emergency Coordinator of the ARRL with the support of the local amateur radio clubs.

2.2 The EC may appoint Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AEC's) as needed.

2.3 <DELETED>

2.4 When the emergency plan is activated, the EC/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 Licking County ARES for the event.

3. PURPOSE

3.1 The purpose of this plan is to provide a written guide containing the minimum information needed in an emergency. Each emergency is different and flexibility is necessary to provide an adequate response. Situations that may not be covered here can still be managed by using what works best, but remains within the intent of the following guidelines:

1. *To provide effective and orderly communications system for emergency traffic within Licking County.*
2. *To communicate and pass traffic to or from any location within the State of Ohio.*
3. *To activate local members of ARES and setup whatever type of net operation needed.*
4. *To provide the names, calls, addresses, and phone numbers of each ARES member for contact purposes during an emergency.*

5. *To provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of key people in our county.*

3.2 The primary responsibility of the Licking County ARES is to furnish emergency communications in the event of a natural or a man made emergency when regular communications fail or become inadequate or overloaded.

3.3 Drills, training and instruction shall be carried out to ensure readiness to respond quickly in providing effective amateur emergency communications.

3.4 Following is a list of jurisdictions/agencies that will be served, as requested, in an emergency. Other city and/or state agencies will be served as requested by Licking County's Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

3.4.1 [Incorporated](#) jurisdictions in Licking County.

3.4.2 The unincorporated area or populations under the authority of the Licking County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

3.4.3 [The American Red Cross](#)

3.4.4 Police and fire departments

3.4.5 Hospitals and nursing homes

3.4.6 The District Seven Ohio Section of the ARRL ARES District Emergency Coordinator when requested by surrounding counties needing assistance.

3.4.7 The [State of Ohio Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security](#)

3.4.8 [The Federal Emergency Management Agency](#)

3.4.9 [The Salvation Army](#)

3.5 Licking County ARES may provide volunteer communications support for other public events in non-emergency situations.

3.6 Licking County ARES contributes to the [Central Ohio Severe Weather Net](#) when weather conditions warrant and reports to the [National Weather Service \(NWS\)](#). No request from a served agency is needed.

4. PLAN ACTIVATION

4.1 Any member of the Licking County ARES who becomes aware that a communications emergency exists, should contact the EC or an AEC and monitor the assigned VHF net frequency of 146.880 MHz for activity. Backup frequencies are the WD8RVK repeater on 145.37 MHz , the CORC repeater on 146.76 MHz, and 146.46 MHz simplex (all FM).

4.2 Operators ARE FORBIDDEN to go to the site of any emergency event unless authorized to do so by Net Control.

Net Control will only authorize operators to go to the site of an emergency event 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. NOTE: Currently mobile units may stage in the parking lots of pre-defined staging areas which are: Kroger or Meijer Grocery Stores, WalMart Stores and Newark Parks and Recreation Department Community Recreation Centers.

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

4.4 In any emergency in which amateur radio is requested to serve, amateur radio operators may be alerted by any Emergency Management Coordinator, American Red Cross, or state official notifying the EC or designated Duty Officer. If the EC and Duty Officer are unavailable, notify an AEC. The AEC will periodically attempt to contact the EC and Duty Officer. The EC or designated Duty Officer 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.

4.5 The ARES OIC will be in charge of all ARES operations during any emergency activation. He/she will be the top Licking 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.

5. MOBILIZATION

5.1 The OIC or designee will notify ARES members by using telephone, pagers and other paging systems.

5.2 If required to accomplish necessary staffing for the emergency, the OIC or designee will transmit on each VHF 144-148 MHz and UHF 420-450 MHz repeater, in turn, advising all stations of the ARES activation. E-mail may also be used when appropriate.

5.3 If necessary, a telephone calling tree will be activated. If telephone service is not available, notification will be by radio and/or courier, as necessary.

5.4 Upon notification that a communications emergency exists, members of the Licking County ARES 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 Licking County Emergency Net. Stations will maintain radio silence, unless they have business with the net.

6. DUTIES OF NET CONTROL STATION (NCS)

6.1 OPEN NETS

The Licking County Emergency Net will be activated by the Net Control Station. Based upon the facts, stations will be fully advised as to the nature of the emergency.

Net control will establish backup frequencies and a backup NCS 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. .

6.2 CHECK IN STATIONS

Stations will be checked in to the emergency net from their home, mobile, and portable stations. All stations shall stand by for further instructions.

A roll call and inventory list will be made of operators and equipment for possible assignment as relief operators.

6.3 Mobile and portable stations will be dispatched as needed either to a "Staging" location or directly to the incident site as determined by the OIC. OIC must notify NCS which Agency Official, by name and title, requested our deployment should our deployed units encounter a restricted access condition or other challenges. The location of each will be noted at all times by the NCS.

6.4 Each site will have a designated Communications Supervisor (CS) who will coordinate

amateur communication at their specific deployment site.

7. OPERATIONS

7.1 MESSAGES

7.1.1 Formal Messages: Formal messages are those which are written in a standard format. All messages which request material or services which may require payment or replacement must be formal messages.

Message Forms: All formal messages must be written in standard ARRL format unless otherwise directed by the served agency.

It is strongly encouraged to restrict messages to 25 words or less, particularly if the message will be relayed multiple times or sent out of the area. Messages over 25 words are much less likely to reach their destination quickly. Operators receiving messages from officials should encourage the officials to produce messages in 25 words or less to ensure prompt and reliable delivery.

The served agency representative can create his/her printed message on the Message Forms provided by the radio operator for that purpose.

Message Precedence: The operator must assign the message an ARRL PRECEDENCE, defined on ARRL CD Form 3. This PRECEDENCE will be used on all messages.

Any operator receiving messages should check the precedence of messages received for EMERGENCY precedence messages.

Anyone giving messages to an operator should check the messages and inform the operator if any of the messages are of EMERGENCY precedence. The person passing the messages should be sure the receiving operator acknowledges this precedence.

Requester name: All FORMAL MESSAGES require the PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY and SITE of the requester .

All requests to dispatch operators to a location require PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY and SITE of the requester. These requests should be written down in the net log.

MESSAGES RECEIVED REQUESTING MATERIALS OR SERVICES WHICH MAY 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.

Save Messages: All operators must save a copy of all formal messages.

7.1.2 Tactical Messages

Tactical Emergency messages, such as FIRE, POLICE or Life-or-Death situations do NOT require NUMBERS. These are first priority messages and we use "Emergency Emergency!" to get attention of the NCS, between transmissions. When accepting such messages for transmission, require only the following information:

- A. To (Example: Newark Fire Department)
- B. What (Example: Pumper truck needed ASAP)
- C. Why (Example: Structure fire)
- D. Where (Example: Newark Catholic High School)

E. Who (Lt. Michael Jones, Newark Fire Department)

7.2 TRANSMITTING

Stations must not transmit unless invited to do so by the Net Control (NCS).

7.2.1 Exceptions:

A. Stations having tactical emergency traffic.

B. As designated in the standard operating procedure of Amateur Radio.

7.2.2 Keep transmissions short and to the point.

All stations, including net control, should leave frequent gaps in their transmissions for emergency traffic. (Long enough for someone to recognize the gap and call "EMERGENCY EMERGENCY.")

7.3 COMMUNICATIONS METHODS

Operators should use the most efficient method available to transmit their message.

If available and appropriate, use the telephone, cell phone, Internet, packet, foot, automobile, etc.

The more traffic passed off the air, the more available ham radio is for traffic to/from locations without alternate means of communications.

8. 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 ARRL. Periodic exercises will be conducted in cooperation with the various Licking County Emergency Management Coordinators.

8.2 The Licking County ARES Net will be held at 9:00 P.M., local time, the first and third Wednesday nights of each month, on the 146.88 MHz repeater. This bi-weekly test may be preceded by an electronic mail notice weekly to all ARES members whose electronic mail addresses are listed on an electronic mail mailing list.

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

8.4 A [Standard Operating Procedure](#) detailing emergency response procedures and actions shall be written.

8.5 The Licking County ARES Emergency Communications Plan and the Standard Operating Procedure shall be reviewed annually with updates as necessary to keep this plan current and viable.

8.6 The ARRL's [Public Service Communications Manual](#) constitutes an overall source of basic information on the League's public service communications program. The appendices provide comprehensive operational details and guidance for both the new and experienced public service communicator.