Emergency Plan
for
Columbia County NY

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Columbia County ARES®

3/3/2017

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Columbia County Amateur Radio Emergency Service,**®** herein referred to as CC-ARES® for brevity, is composed of FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operators who have voluntarily registered their capabilities and radio equipment for the purpose of Emergency and Public Service communications duty with the County ARES**®** Emergency Coordinator. These operators are registered with the American Radio Relay League's ARES and may be similarly registered with other agencies.

1.2. Under Federal regulations, all public service communications provided by Amateur Radio Operators are furnished without compensation.

1.3. The CC-ARES® functions under this Emergency Plan under the direction of the Columbia County Emergency Coordinator, who is appointed by the Eastern New York Section Emergency Coordinator, who consults with the District Emergency Coordinator.

1.4. The EC has appointed Assistant ECs as needed for CC-ARES® to function efficiently.

1.5. ARES and Amateur Radio emergency Service are registered trademarks of the American Radio Relay League, Inc.

1.6. This plan is a composite document containing new original material, edited pre-existing material and material borrowed from the Emergency Plans and good practice ideas of other counties.

1.7. Map of Columbia county area served by CC-ARES®. While our primary service area is Columbia County, we are available where and when needed if so activated and authorized.
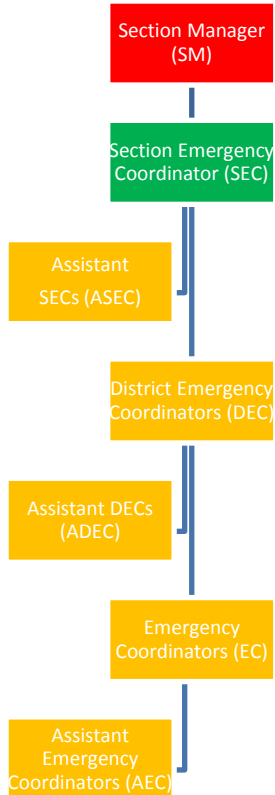
2. PURPOSE

2.1. The purpose of this plan is to implement Part 97.1 of the Rules of the Federal Communications Commission, and to provide a general written guide containing the **minimum** information that would be needed in an emergency. Each emergency is different, and the flexibility to provide an adequate response to each is a necessity.

2.2. The primary responsibility of CC-ARES® is to provide emergency communications in the event of a disaster, when normal communication channels fail or are inadequate, and can provide adjunct communications if required . This plan is intended to outline the resources and basic operations of CC-ARES®.

2.3. All drills, training, and instruction will be carried out to insure readiness to respond quickly when an occasion arises, and provide for effective amateur radio emergency communications in accordance with this plan.

3. OVERSIGHT & STRUCTURE

3.1. All Memoranda of Understanding, Emergency Plans and related documentation for local jurisdiction must be filed with the DEC, the SEC, and SM and the ARRL to enable resource allocation and planning. All documentation is subject to review and approval. The served agencies shall be the listed in appendix 'E'.

3.2. ARES® is part of the ARRL and thus all ARES® officials are field officials of the ARRL. The plan, when activated, will work in close cooperation with all ARRL section level Field Services appointees as appropriate, and adhere to the Chain of Command below.

3.3 The Emergency Coordinator for a county ARES® group is in charge of ARES® operations in the county. ARES® operators in the county report to the EC. The EC reports to the District Emergency Coordinator (DEC.) The EC is ultimately responsible for the planning, training and operations of the ARES® group.

3.4 Assistant Emergency Coordinators are appointed by, and serve the county EC. They are assigned specific support roles within the organization.

3.5. Should the EC be unavailable, an AEC or other operator shall be designated as the interface between the OEM and ARES® operators.

3.6. When ARES® members operate in support of government agencies or government managed emergency operations, the federally mandated National Incident Management System (NIMS) requires that each member have only one supervisor. This concept is named *Unity of Command* and is required for organizations to be NIMS compliant. Thus, when operating in support of government operations, the EC shall report directly to the Incident Commander. All other CC- ARES® operators will continue to report to the EC.

4. OPERATIONS

4.1 CC- ARES® operates under the "lead agency" principal. This means that the group responds to requests from the agency that has the authority under local, county, or state legislation to provide the lead in response to an emergency or disaster. In most instances, this will be the Office of Emergency Management (OEM.) By following this guideline, amateur radio resources are coordinated through the county OEM and any conflicts for resources are decided by OEM officials who are in a better position to prioritize communications needs.

4.2. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 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. Personnel and organizations that have not been trained in the common NIMS framework are not considered capable of being of assistance.

4.2.1 CC-ARES® has an emergency structure that conforms to the NIMS standard.

4.3. CC- ARES® will have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Columbia County OEM and major served agencies within the county or at least provide them with contact information.

4.4 In any emergency, it is essential that there be an orderly and controlled response. CC- ARES® must be part of that response, and function and abide by the lead agency's emergency plan. It is essential; that we remember that we are there to provide communications for those agencies responding to the disaster.

5. ACTIVATING THE PLAN

5.1. Any member of CC-ARES® suspecting that a communications emergency may exist should monitor the assigned repeater frequency for emergency activity, and in the event of no activity, make every attempt to contact the EC or AEC for clarification. See Appendix 'B' for contact information. The EC or AEC will then contact the 911 Center and/or the Office of Emergency Management for further information and potential action.

5.2. As appropriate, the 911 Center Director will duly notify all CC-ARES® members of activation by way of SMS texting to the cellular communications devices registered with the center.

5.3. In the event of a failure of the cellular system and land based telephone service is available, the EC and AECs should be notified by 911 via telephone. Membership notification will proceed as outlined in the telephone tree. (See calling tree in appendix B)

5.4. In an emergency in which Amateur Radio might serve the community, Amateur Radio operators may be alerted by any served agency. Those operators are requested to contact the EC by any means available. Members should also monitor Emergency Alert System stations (EAS) for information and relay any pertinent details to the EC, AEC or designee. The EC, AEC or designee will confer with County emergency personnel to formalize activation if it is warranted. The 911 Center will respond as outlined in 5.2, and 5.3.

5.5. CC- ARES® should not respond to any emergency or request from any agency unless the EC or AEC (or in their absence the DEC, SEC, or SM) has authorized the deployment of ARES®.

5.6. Once CC- ARES® has received a request, the EC or AEC should notify the DEC and/or the SEC as soon as possible. This will facilitate any request for additional assistance from other ARES® groups and the District and Section.

5.7. The following individuals and agencies have authority to activate CC- ARES® and mobilize personnel and resources on a Section basis:
5.7.1. CC- ARES® Emergency Coordinator (EC.)
5.7.2. In the absence of the above official, his or her successor or designees.
5.7.3. The Columbia County 911 Center Director.

5.8. The following individuals and agencies may request activation of CC- ARES® through the above officials:
5.8.1. Central NY District Emergency Coordinator (DEC)
5.8.2. Eastern NY Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC)
5.8.3. Columbia County Office of Emergency Management
5.8.4. National Weather Service (SKYWARN Program)
5.8.5. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) FEMA or other designated agency under the Federal Response Plan
5.8.6. Any agency that has an existing MOU with ARRL. (i.e. American Red Cross; National Weather Service; Salvation Army; etc.)
5.8.7. Any other agency requiring communications assistance when deemed appropriate by the above officials, including any fire department, ambulance corps, or state or local police agency.

6. ARES MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE

6.1. As outlined above, the 911 Center will alert each CC-ARES® member by available means.

6.2. As necessary, to fill potential SMS gaps, and if telephone service available, the telephone tree will be activated by members. See Appendix 'B'.

6.3. Upon awareness or notification that a communications emergency exists, CC-ARES® EC or AEC will initiate an emergency net on 147.81/147.21 repeater, and members are to check in as soon as possible. The 147.69/147.09 repeater will serve as backup. Additional net notifications may be called out on the 444.925/449.925 and the 222.680/224.280 repeaters if needed.

6.4. The EC or station designated by the EC will assume Net Control Station (NCS) duties. The NCS station will preferably be outside of the affected area and have access to commercial power and telephone. The primary intended location of the NCS will be the Columbia County Emergency Operations Center located in the public service building at 85 Industrial Tract, Hudson, NY 12534. It may be necessary to operate the NCS from a home or mobile location until such time as access to the EOC is gained. NCS is an operational paradigm – *not* a specific location.

6.5. Operators and/or alternate locations will be assigned to relieve NCS personnel in order to ensure continuous operation.

6.6. Location assignments and team designations will be ordered by the EC as required by the situation at hand, based on information provided by the County emergency services agencies. Mobile and/or portable stations may be assigned to locations required by the calling agency.

6.7. As circumstantially required and as authorized, the EC or his designee will request assistance from the DEC, SEC or outside agencies.

6.8. The EC or his designee will request assistance from non-member, licensed amateur operators within his jurisdiction if so approved by the appropriate officials.

6.9. Liaison stations that have been previously assigned permanent duties as "Official Emergency Stations" will be dispatched to their tasks as required. Any additional, required liaisons to nets or agencies will be assigned as required. Additional radio operators that are assigned to handle radio communications will be designated as "Liaison Station" for the duration of their participation.

7. DUTIES OF THE NCS

7.1. The CC-ARES® Emergency Net will be called to order by the NCS.

7.2. Members of CC-ARES® will check into the net from their mobile and home stations and await further instructions from the EC or an AEC. Check ins should proceed in the form of the operator's first name followed by the FCC callsign, station location and station power and status thus facilitating the entries on form ICS-211p-AR.

7.3. Liaison stations will be assigned to the following National Traffic System nets. (See Net Schedule in Appendix C.)

7.4. NCS will maintain a link with served agencies during activations.

7.5. NCS will maintain other links as specified by the EC or SEC.

7.6. The NCS will prudently dispatch mobile and portable stations as needed. These operators should possess a "go kit," containing all the necessary radio, utility, survival and first aid equipment to operate during an emergency. A portable commercial AM/FM radio is recommended as well.

7.7. NCS will record operator sign in and sign out times. The AEC charged with maintenance of documents and records for CC-ARES® will be the custodian for all Log Sheets and Message Traffic during the net. All associated documents will be maintained at the CC-ARES® office located in the CC-EOC.

7.8. NCS will maintain a regular roll call every thirty minutes or at a practical interval, depending on traffic loads.

8. OPERATIONS

8.1. All messages must be permanently recorded and logged using the presently assigned ICS protocols and forms as defined by the EC and NCS. See Appendix 'A.' Facilities for such will be provided by CC- ARES® at deployment. Electronically recorded messages will be printed on a real time basis or as soon as practical, and will adhere to the ICS formats. Messages received in the ARRL format must be converted to the NIMS-ICS format before delivery to EOC and agency personnel.

8.2. When assigned a task by NCS, the CC- ARES® personnel will report:
8.2.1. Time of arrival and departure from assignment.
8.2.2. Status of assigned station, premises, or mobile or portable conditions present. Should an operator feel that their safety is compromised or is uncomfortable with an assignment, they must notify the NCS immediately. NCS will work with the operator in an attempt to correct the situation.
8.2.3. Intention of leaving post for personal reasons.(bathroom, food, rest.)
8.2.4. Upon completion of assignment and reassignment availability.
8.2.5. If a directive cannot be complied with, the NCS must be notified **as soon as possible** to enable corrective measures if possible.
8.2.6. Any traffic required and authorized .

8.3. All messages **must be signed** by the official who originates it, with his or her title, taking responsibility for their contents. Unsigned messaged are considered invalid and will not be relayed until a proper signature is applied.

8.4. All messages must use the precedence's of EMERGENCY, Priority, Welfare and Routine, as defined on the ARRL Form FSD-3. Operators are not to modify any message, but must relay or deliver it as it was received.

8.5. Stations will not transmit messages unless directed to do so by the NCS, following the assigned method according to the EC's deployment plan. The only exception to this is for a station having EMERGENCY traffic, at which time that station is to declare an EMERGENCY and assume immediate permission to transmit a message by preceding the message with the phrase "BREAK-BREAK-BREAK." The transmitting station must identify itself by giving both its tactical callsign and operator callsign before and after the message structure. ALL active CC-ARES® stations are to physically copy the message for the purpose of relay should that become necessary. The forms are to be retained and submitted with all other routine paperwork to the NCS upon deactivation of the net.

8.6. Upon advice of an authorized county department, or served agency, the EC may choose to contact and notify members of a potential deployment situation. Two status levels potentially leading to full activation may be declared.

8.5.1 **Monitoring** CC-ARES® operators are requested to monitor all available means of notification for potential deployment situations, and report as needed.

8.5.2 **Hot Standby** CC-ARES® operators are notified that their services may be needed in less than 48 hours. Team leaders should notify and prepare their teams; operators are advised to secure property and prepare for deployment.

8.6. Stations transmitting advisories to NCS will keep all information factual.

9. DRILLS, TESTS AND ALERTS

9.1. An annual test will be conducted in October in conjunction with the nationwide ARRL Simulated Emergency Test.

9.2. Field drills at various locations will be undertaken as practical to expose members to as many different venues as possible.

9.3. Tabletop drills will be conducted likewise for the purpose of keeping current with present forms and procedures.

9.4. CC-ARES® will provide communications in conjunction with local social events, to test the overall effectiveness of this plan.

9.5. The CC-ARES® Emergency Net meets on the 147.81/147.21 repeater each Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM (local) for the purpose of training and message handling. (see Net Call up Procedure in Appendix D

9.6. At the discretion of the EC, an ARES® net will be activated unannounced via the 911 Center texting facility and/or telephone tree at least once per year.

10.   RESOURCES

10.1. Volunteers
  10.1.1 Columbia County ARES®
    10.1.1.1   These volunteers are licensed radio amateur operators.
    10.1.1.2   They are expected to participate in preparedness drills.
    10.1.1.3   They carry ARES® certification issued by an Eastern New York Appointee (SEC, DEC, EC) through the ARRL.
    10.1.1.4   **Under no circumstances shall they self-deploy to an incident. Their use will be subject to registration and assignment by the EC or other ARES® officer and/or the OEM under ICS.**

  10.1.2. Other Licensed Amateur Radio Operators
    10.1.2.1.   These volunteers are licensed amateur radio operators.
    10.1.2.2.   They are not members of CC- ARES®.
    10.1.2.3.   They may be members of other public service organizations, such as SKYWARN, or REACT.
    10.1.2.4.   They do not ordinarily participate in preparedness drills, but may have had other training.
    10.1.2.5.   Their activity will be closely monitored by CC- ARES® members. Their use will be subject to registration and assignment by the EC or other ARES® officer and/or the OEM under ICS. **Under no circumstances should they report directly to an incident without prior assignment.**

  10.1.3. Acquaintances
    10.1.3.1.   Able bodied citizens who show proper identification (Driver's License, etc.)
    10.1.3.2.   These volunteers are called into service with CC- ARES® volunteers only when circumstances require such action and when approved by OEM.
    10.1.3.3.   Citizens may inquire of the EC or designee for assignment.
    10.1.3.4.   Their activity will be closely monitored by CC- ARES® members. Their use will be subject to registration and assignment by the EC or other ARES® officer and/or the OEM under ICS. **Under no circumstances should they report to an incident without prior assignment.**

10.2. Equipment
  10.2.1. All CC- ARES® members have pledged their services and the use of their own equipment in the event of an emergency.
  10.2.2. CC- ARES® will work closely with the served agency so that resources will be utilized.

10.3. CC- ARES® as a Resource
  10.3.1. CC- ARES® is a communications resource considered available to government and public service agencies as required and authorized.
  10.3.2. The abilities of CC- ARES® may be diversified or as specialized as needed. However, the primary role of CC- ARES® is communications.

10.3.3. Under Part-97 of the FCC rules, amateur radio operators may not receive compensation for their services. When working with a "served agency" in certain instances, reimbursement for mileage, meals and other incidental expenses may be acceptable when prearranged.

10.3.4. Workers compensation and/or liability insurance may be provided by a "served agency." This is at the option of the "served agency" and CC-ARES® stations must follow the "served agency" guidelines for such. However, CC- ARES® will not be held liable for any injury or death of an amateur participating in an ARES® exercise or emergency.

10.3.5. Individuals with CC-ARES® may have additional training or expertise (EMT, HAZMAT, Fire fighter, Law Enforcement, etc.) However, when on post as a CC- ARES® volunteer, they are primarily as a communications resource.

10.3.6. Volunteers in many areas are being highly scrutinized these days. This ranges from general or criminal background checks through financial (credit scores, etc.) and personal character references. Many people (not just hams) who have nothing to hide look upon this as a form of invasion of privacy. In most cases however, the maximum degree of vetting for ARES® participation with a served agency is a criminal background check. Those who are concerned should realize that background checks can be made by governmental agencies without permission and that there may be background checks made without an individual's knowledge prior to an actual deployment they agree to perform. Present ARRL advice is that volunteers may arrange, at their own initiative and expense, to have a criminal background check performed by a state or local law enforcement agency. This should done well before an emergency.

10.4. Frequencies

10.4.1. A listing of regularly used emergency net frequencies is listed in Appendix C.

10.4.2. A listing of regularly used NTS frequencies is listed in Appendix C.

10.4.3. A frequency database may be recorded online or stored by other electronic means.

10.4.4. Frequencies used by CC- ARES® will be coordinated with the STM and served agencies as needed.

10.4.5. Public service frequencies (EMS, fire, law, wx) that are in local use, and potentially provide useable information to operators will be on file at the CC- ARES® office and distributed as an optional resource.

10.5. Volunteers outside of CC- ARES® Jurisdiction

10.5.1 Mutual Aid must be requested by officials under Plan sections 5.7 & 5.8.

10.5.2. Mutual Aid must always be coordinated by appropriate officials.

10.5.3. Amateur radio operators outside CC- ARES® jurisdiction will check in with their respective Emergency Net for assignment.

10.6. Columbia County ARES® member outside the jurisdiction.

10.6.1. Should the services of a CC- ARES® member be required outside of the region or state, the agency requesting Mutual Aid must coordinate such a request with the officials listed in plan sections 5.7 & 5.8.

APPENDIX 'A':

- Form ICS-213 GENERAL MESSAGE is to be used for all over the air traffic utilizing all modes of passage. All information blocks must be filled in, and the form must be signed by the originating party, thus approving the passage of the message.

- Form ICS-309ar COMMUNICATIONS LOG is used to track all messages sent and received using ICS-213, and also all inter station traffic.

- Form ICS-211p-AR is to be used to record net operator check-ins and check-outs.

- Form ICS-211e-AR is to be used for recording equipment used during an incident and net operations. Any maintenance requirements should be noted in the 'REMARKS' column.

- ICS-205-AR INCIDENT / EVENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PLAN will be used if necessary to outline repeater and channel assignments, specifying channel function, tone and intended purpose.

APPENDIX 'B':

Telephone callup list.

	Home	Work	Mobile	
Barry Thompson	518-938-1148	518-938-1144	518-755-5606	EC
Wayne Gearing	518-392-5704		518-610-1929	AEC
Antonio Merante	518-828-5366		518-378-4534	
Nathan I Meier[3]	518-938-1148		518-821-4024	
Dominic Merante	518-822-9899		518-755-3872	
Jack Griffin	518-329-0578		347-304-1778	
Joe Ciampaglione			845-235-9855	
Robert J Davies[1,4]			845-706-7767	
David Lewis[2]	518-325-9216			
Jules Madey	518-325-5604		518-791-0974	AEC
Sean Madey			518-821-6093	AEC
Ingrid H Pilgrim[3,4]	612-229-8092		612-229-8976	
William J Pilgrim[3,4]	612-229-8092		612-229-8976	
Andrew J Madey[4]	518-392-0144		808-225-7354	
Christian Sweningsen	518-758-7374		518-859 1340	AEC
Eric Sieber	518-392-9452		518-708-0255	
Vincent Vispo[3,4]	518-672-7994		518-567-8848	
Catherine Dibble[4]			669-246-0643	

If you cannot reach your designated contact below your name, you are to assume the calling of that contact's assignments and beyond as necessary. The buck stops with you!

1 Primary county is Greene; Call only if a general deployment is indicated.
2 Seasonal member; not available in winter months.
3 Minor.
4 Must be paired with an experienced operator.

APPENDIX 'C':

Local Net Schedules (all times local)

CC-ARES® Net   147.81/147.21   1900 Hrs. Tuesday

Capital District Traffic Net	147.75/147.15	1830 Hrs. M-F
	144.57/145.17 127.3Hz Tone	1830 Hrs. Sat-Sun
Hudson Valley Net	146.37/146.97	1930 Hrs. Daily
NY Public Operations Net	3.925 MHz	1700 Hrs. Daily
NYS Phone Traffic Net	3.925 MHz	1800 Hrs. Daily
NYS RACES Net (voice)	3.9935 MHz	0900 Hrs. Sunday
NYS CW Net (early)	3.575 MHz	1800 Hrs. Daily
	1.825 MHz	
NYS CW Net (late)	3.575 MHz	2200 Hrs. Daily
	1.825 MHz	

APPENDIX 'D':

Columbia County ARES® Emergency Net Call Up

1. **This is _your call_ Net Control Station calling the Columbia County ARES® Net. This net is being called for the purpose of providing Emergency Communications practice. This is not an emergency. This is a directed net. Stations not joining are requested to clear the frequency until the conclusion of the net - Please Stand By.**
(Pause 10 seconds, repeat, pause 6 seconds)

2. **This is _your call_ Net Control. Any stations with traffic please call _your call_ and give your first name, call and nature of your traffic at this time – OVER**
Log All Traffic Read list of responding stations.

3. **Portable, battery, mobile and echolink stations please call _your call_ and give your first name and call at this time. – OVER**
Log all stations responding. Read list of responding stations.

4. **All other stations please call _your call_ and give your first name and call** at this time.
OVER – Log all stations responding. Read list of responding stations.

5. **_Your call_ Net Control to _____. Please act as alternate Net Control Station in the event of our leaving the air. Please acknowledge. – OVER** - **Log Response**

6. **Are there any late check-ins? Please call _your call_ now giving your first name and call. Log response.**

7. **ORDER OF BUSINESS:**
    Message Traffic from responders with traffic. Copy and Log.
    Bulletins or info.
    Thank the responders for checking in
    Training – exercise traffic
    Turn net to informal mode. Invite constructive comments and remarks.

8. **Are there any late check-ins? Please call _your call_ now giving your first name and call. Log response.**

9. **CLOSE THE NET:**
    On behalf of the Columbia County ARES® Net, I wish to thank the Rip Van Winkle Amateur Radio Society for the use of this repeater. This is _your call_ Net Control Station closing the Columbia County ARES® Net and returning the frequency to general amateur use at _____ (time) – _your call_ - Out.

APPENDIX 'E':

List of served agencies:

Columbia Memorial Hospital
Pine Haven Nursing Home
American Red Cross (various locations)
Columbia Greene College
Greenport EMS
Community Rescue Squad
Columbia County Health Dept.
Columbia County EOC & 911 Center
All Columbia County Agencies

Pending:
Salvation Army (SATURN)
Whittier Nursing Home
Barnwell Nursing Home
NYS Firemen's Home
Livingston Nursing Home
National MS Society
Katterskill Long Term Care I

Other Organizations as requested