Arkansas ARES/RACES
Standard Operating Procedures

The purpose of this SOP is to establish standard operating procedures within the State of Arkansas Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) program, and between the State and local government ARES/RACES programs, in order to provide efficient and reliable emergency communications. Secondarily, this SOP is to be used as a guide for local governments in establishing procedures for local ARES/RACES programs.

1. Introduction –Arkansas ARES/RACES exists to provide communications for state and local government agencies in time of an emergency and for periodic drills to hone skills in support of the Arkansas ARES/RACES mission. Usually this service will be provided as formal written traffic following American Radio Relay League/National Traffic System (ARRL/NTS) format but is not limited to this format. At times, informal tactical communications may be required, or specialized served agency traffic may be necessary for the urgent protection of life and property, where time is of the essence.

2. Coverage – Coverage area of the Arkansas ARES/RACES is the State of Arkansas. While the primary concern is the State of Arkansas, out of state stations may, at times, be able to provide helpful information. If such information is required and can be easily obtained from out of the state stations, then they should certainly be utilized. Utilization of out of state stations may be helpful in acquiring informal information, but with respect to formal traffic, proper NTS routing should normally be followed. In the case of Priority and Emergency traffic, traffic may be routed to out of state stations if the Net Control Station (NCS) determines that this will be more expeditious than normal NTS routing.

3. Nets – The Arkansas ARES/RACES nets are listed at the end of this document.

4. Activation and duration – Arkansas ARES/RACES is designed to be self-activating upon a valid request from a State or local government official. The Section Emergency Coordinator, in cooperation with the District Emergency Coordinators, is responsible for identifying the resources necessary to support a statewide activation of the Arkansas ARES/RACES. The SEC or other delegated section official will work with the Section Traffic Manager (STM) to identify critical operational locations to support the specific needs of a particular disaster situation and the resources needed to support net operations and other statewide communications on behalf of state agencies.

Whenever a local ARES/RACES group activates for a disaster, the Emergency Coordinator is responsible for advising the District Emergency Coordinator of the activation and of the scale and scope of the disaster. The DEC should assess the situation to determine if adequate resources exist within the district to meet the needs of the local activation, and assess the potential for statewide impact.

The District Emergency Coordinator is responsible for advising the Section Emergency Coordinator, as well as other DEC's that could possibly have impact in their jurisdictions of the nature, size and scope of a disaster, as soon as possible after local activation.

The Section Emergency Coordinator will be responsible for assigning ARES Mutual Assistance Teams (ARESMAT) to help staff jurisdictions without sufficient resources to meet the needs of served agencies-particularly those with which the ARRL has formal memoranda of understanding for support-inside or outside of an affected area as appropriate.

The SM and the SEC shall be notified of any request at the earliest opportunity. Calling trees, email lists, radio, or any other means available may be used in the notification process. The Nets shall not be terminated without the approval of either the Section Manager (SM) or SEC. During the duration of the activation, and subject to the oversight of the SM and SEC, the STM shall direct, supervise, and maintain all nets. There may be activation without using Arkansas ARES/RACES HF. Historically, nets have been called on VHF / UHF repeaters in conjunction with VHF digital operations. These repeaters are used when a specific area or region can be serviced without the need of HF operations.

5. ARES Wide-Area Tactical Repeaters – The use of VHF and UHF tactical repeaters for wide area coverage has been proven in the Arkansas Section during tornadoes, floods, and other activations. A "designated tactical repeater" is one that has broad coverage, and the trustees agree to certain terms of use in activation. The terms of use are common sense applications (e.g., no bells and whistles, no auto patch [except for ECOM by designated officials] abbreviated courtesy tone, no announcements save for FCC ID at 15+ wpm, and others).

6. Assignment of Net Managers – The NM of the Razorback Net shall be responsible for the Arkansas ARES/RACES/A.

The NM of the Arkansas Mockingbird Net shall be responsible for the ARKANSAS ARES/RACES/B.

The NM for the OZK CW Net shall be responsible for ARKANSAS ARES/RACES/C.

The State Races Officer or an individual or individuals designated by the STM shall be responsible for the all the digital nets.

7. NM responsibilities – Once it is determined that the Arkansas ARES/RACES will be called to session, each NM shall arrange NCS schedules. NCS duty should not last longer than 2 hours at a time whenever possible, ideally, not longer than 1 hour. Also, after receiving net statistics from each NCS, the NM should report them to the SEC with a copy to the STM. NMs may also help arrange for liaisons to be on board when needed.

8. NCS qualifications – Arkansas ARES/RACES Net Control Stations should be drawn from the regular NTS NCS ranks whenever possible. They must be capable of

maintaining net discipline and handling nets with high traffic loads. They must also be well acquainted with the Arkansas NTS net control SOP. Since the use of 80 and 40-meter frequencies will be necessary, Arkansas ARES/RACES NCS must have good 80 and 40-meter capabilities.

9. Liaison qualifications – Arkansas ARES/RACES liaison stations should be capable of both phone and CW operation. They must be well acquainted with the Arkansas NTS liaison SOP. They should be accomplished at liaison operation. It should be noted that in the event of wide area emergency, liaison stations might be needed to go to 20 meters. Liaison stations should have good 80, 40 and 20-meter capabilities.

10. Net discipline – The Arkansas ARES/RACES are directed nets and shall always be operated as such. Therefore, the NCS must maintain strict control of his or her net. This is of primary importance in time of emergency. Informal chatter and comments should be allowed only when allowed by NCS and there is NO other traffic pending or expected.

11. Procedures - Most emergencies require a "fly by the seat of your pants" approach. However, there are some general procedures that should always be followed. Common sense and standard procedure used in normal NTS nets are of the utmost importance.

11.1 Net call up – Identify the net and NCS. A brief explanation of why the net is in session should be given. Long call-ups should be avoided. Explain that the net is directed and only formal traffic and net business will be handled unless otherwise requested. Identify key receive stations (i.e., Conway, Little Rock, and those in affected areas) and liaison stations. If liaison stations have not been designated, do so at this time (this is an NCS responsibility) don't wait until you need liaison functions to call for them. That will only cause confusion.

11.2 Traffic – Call for emergency or priority traffic first. All traffic should be handled in that order. Pay particular attention to traffic going into and out of the Arkansas EOC. This traffic, if equal priority, should be handled first. Accept routine traffic only after clearing all higher precedence traffic possible.

11.3 Routing – In times of high traffic loads it will not be possible to pass all traffic at one time. As soon as traffic can be handled, begin calling for outlets and get things moving. Then go back and continue listing. The use of side frequencies is very important during high traffic loads. Use them wisely. NCS should by no means send more than 2 transmit stations off to the same frequency at the same time. Traffic may be handled on net frequency only when it is light. As much traffic as possible should be sent via digital pathways, especially if the traffic involves long lists or resource requests.

11.4 Use of relays and alternate net frequencies – There will undoubtedly be times when band conditions will make operations on 80 meters difficult. When this happens, NCS has 3 alternatives. The use of relays, sending stations to alternate frequencies or move the entire net to the alternate frequency. The first choice is the use of

relays. Second, move the stations passing traffic to the alternate frequency. And last, move the entire net. Moving the net should only be done as a last resort, since it will usually cause confusion and some stations are bound to get lost in the shuffle. If the net is moved, a directing station should be monitoring the former frequency to direct those who have not received the word of the move.

11.5 Check-ins – First priority is always the served "customers", the county/city EOC's or the stations that they assign to be their representative. General check-ins are used ONLY when there is a need for specific information of a location, or bulk information such as weather, local conditions, etc. In this case the NCS should request all stations, when checking in, to provide the necessary information. Please remember, the purpose of these nets is to provide emergency communications, not to fill up rosters.

11.6 Closure – The Arkansas ARES/RACES nets shall remain in operation until instructions for closure are received from or approved by either the SEC or SM. This will usually be done by means of QNC traffic. (A message to all participating stations)

11.7 Reporting – All net controls are responsible for reporting net statistics to the proper NM. The NMs should in turn compile all statistics and report them to the SEC with a copy to the STM.

11.8 Interference – Stations interfering with Emergency Operations should be identified and their call sign provided to the SM or SEC. The SM and SEC have direct contact numbers for the FCC and where a friendly request to the disrupting station falls on deaf ears, and the interfering station is causing disruption of declared emergency traffic, immediate FCC intervention will be requested. Remember, most stations will gladly give emergency stations sufficient room to operate without interference, if you make them aware of the situation in a friendly manner!

11.9 Declaration of Communications Emergency – The SM and SEC shall make all requests for declaration of a communications emergency through the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management.

12. Digital Operations – There are three digital modes employed by Arkansas ARES/RACES: Packet on VHF, WinLink, and PSK31 on HF. Messages may be sent to the Arkansas EOC by using the mailbox at ADEM on packet, or direct keyboard contact, or via WinLink. Messages to other entities (i.e. County EOC's, hospitals, etc.) will be made on VHF packet, WinLink, or direct keyboard contact. The Digital Coordinator will maintain a list of mailboxes. All messages should conform to the Reporting Standards used by ADEM.

13. Message Reporting Standards - In the subject field on your email form please use the format:

(Organization Name) (Category) (Type of Incident)

Examples:
Madison County Request 001 Security Personnel Needed Tornado
Monroe County Damage Homes Flooding
Garland County Shelter Hazmat Spill

Impact
(Organization Name) Impact (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain the initial information to be reported. In the body of the message you would put the what, when, where and why information about the event along with who (point of contact and point of contact phone number or means of communication needed to establish contact).

Examples:
Lonoke County Impact Tornado Touchdown
Lonoke County Impact Hazmat Spill

Notification Received
(Organization Name) Notification Received (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information about who has been notified, when they were notified etc.

Examples:
State Health Notification Received Hazmat spill
Lincoln County Notification Received Level 4 event PBA

EOC
(Organization Name) EOC (Status) (Type of Incident)

This subject standard will provide status of your emergency operation center. The status field would be one of the following: Activated, Operational, Standing Down.

Examples:
Grant County EOC Activated PBA Level 4 Event
Grant County EOC Standing Down Tornado
Garland County EOC Operational Winter Storm

Damage
(Organization Name) Damage (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information about types of damages, total count of damaged homes, businesses, facilities and monetary totals.

Examples:
Drew County Damage Tornado
Scott County Damage Explosion

Evac
(Organization Name) Evac (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information related to evacuation of people in an area. Where, when and how many.

Examples :
Fulton County Evac Flooding
Madison County Evac Winter Storm

Shelter
(Organization Name) Shelter (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information related to the establishment of shelters. The types of information needed are the location, point of contact name, POC phone number and number of people sheltered.

Examples:
Logan County Shelter Nuclear One Event
Pope County Shelter Nuclear One Event

Request
(Organization Name) Request (Number) (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information about requests for assistance. Each email should be a separate request for assistance for each resource needed and each should have a number assigned by the Organization to aid in tracking. This makes it easier to track each item requested.

Examples:
Monroe County Request 0001 Medical Supplies Tornado
Conway County Request 0089 Security Personnel Earthquake

Declaration
(Organization Name) Declaration (Status) (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information related to the declaration of a state of emergency within the Organization. The declaration

status will be verbal or formal. It becomes formal when a signed declaration is received by ADEM.

Examples:
Sharp County Declaration Verbal Tornado
Sharp County Declaration Formal Winter Storm

Road Closure
(Organization Name) Road Closure (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information related to the closing of roads with the where, when, why, and point of contact details.

Example:
Garland County Road Closure Highway 5 Flooding

TCP
(Organization) TCP (Type of Incident)

The emails with this subject would contain information about the status of traffic control points.

Example :
Jefferson County TCP PBA Level 4 Event

Reception Centers
(Organization) Reception Centers (Type of Incident)

The emails with this subject would contain information about the status of reception centers established.

Examples:
Dallas County Reception Centers PBA Level 4 Event

News Release
(Organization) News Release (Number) (Type of Incident)

This standard allow for the distribution and tracking of news releases.

Example:
CSEPP Joint Information Center News Release # 0002 PBA Level 4 Event
Madison County News Release # 0034 Flooding

Information
(Organization) Information (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information that doesn't fit into the other categories of subjects.

Examples:
Cleburne County Information Hazmat

Sitrep
(Organization Name) Sitrep (Type of Incident)

The email with this subject would contain information contained in an attached situation report. Just change the information at the top of the document to reflect your organization's information. Enter the information under each of the headings on the report and attach it to an email with the Sitrep subject. This report should be sent at 30 minutes after the EOC becomes operational and every hour thereafter if possible. Any changed information in the follow-up Sitrep sent hourly should be colored in red. This information is then placed in the state Sitrep that may be posted to the ADEM web page during major events.

Examples:
Baxter County Sitrep Tornado
Grant County Sitrep PBA Level 4 Event

The use of these standards will aid us in both tracking the event information and in providing you with timely assistance.

Below are the address to send incident reporting emails to:

Pine Bluff Arsenal Events - cseppevents@adem.state.ar.us

Via Winlink – KB5LZK

Everything else - adem@adem.state.ar.us

14. Conclusion – In any net, one of the most important functions is that of the NCS. This is why most of this SOP is aimed at NCS functions. The NCS who maintains control of his or her net insures that it will run efficiently and makes his / her own job much easier. The purpose of this SOP is to aid the efficient operations of Arkansas ARES/RACES. It is not intended to circumvent the SOP for NTS nets. To the contrary, they overlap quite a bit. It should be perfectly clear that the NTS SOP should always be followed except for

the few differences given above, or, when due to extreme urgency for the protection of life and property, when time is of the essence.

Arkansas ARES/RACES Net Listing

Net Name	Frequency	Primary Purpose	Net Manager
ARKANSAS ARES/RACES "A"	3987.5 kHz (7260 kHz Alt)	Traffic into and out of the Arkansas EOC and local EOC's	AR STM
ARKANSAS ARES/RACES "B"	Assigned as needed	Health and Welfare, Routine Traffic. Overflow from ARKANSAS ARES/RACES/"A"	Razorback NM
ARKANSAS ARES/RACES "C"	Assigned as needed	CW net, backup for ARKANSAS ARES/RACES/"A" and ARKANSAS ARES/RACES/"B"	OZK CW NM
ARKANSAS ARES/RACES "D"	3626.9 WL 7068.9 WL 7101.2WL(P3) 10146.2 WL PSK31 as needed	PSK31; Digital Operations - NON-ARES/RACES OPS, WinLink	AR State RACES Officer

Packet Operations

Arkansas Packet Network	ARES/RACES Traffic	AR State RACES Officer
145.590 MHz	Central and SE AR 1200 Baud packet	
145.010 MHz	SW AR 1200 Baud Packet	
147.495 MHz	N AR 1200 Baud packet	

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