

Missouri St. Charles County ARES® Emergency Operations Plan

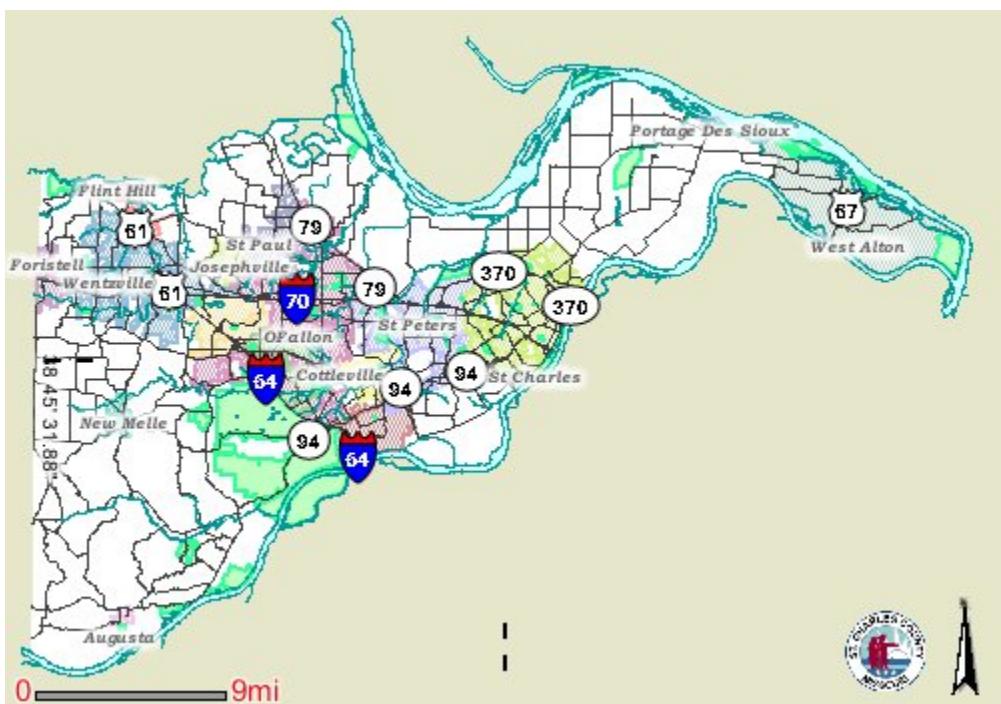


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Emergency Coordinator
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Background

The Amateur Radio Service is authorized under Part 97 of the Federal Communications Commission's rules as a "voluntary non-commercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications." The American Radio Relay League® (ARRL) facilitates emergency communications through its Field Organization in general and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) in particular.

The ARES is the emergency branch of the ARRL Field Organization. It operates under the direction of the Section Manager, an elected position within the Field Organization. There are 71 sections in the United States and its possessions. The State of Missouri is comprised of one section. Within the Missouri Section, there are 9 districts and 115 local jurisdictions including all 114 Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis. Each of the local jurisdictions should have an EC assigned. These designated EC's report to their respective DEC in each of the 9 districts who in turn report to the SEC. An updated listing of Missouri Section ARES leadership is kept at www.ares-mo.org/districts.asp and all members are encouraged to keep contact information for their respective areas on hand.



The ARES operates to serve both governmental and non-governmental agencies through "Memoranda of Understanding" (MOUs). These MOUs are non-binding letters explaining the participating parties' roles and responsibilities and are initiated at the national, section and local levels. Written MOUs need not be in place on a section or local level if they exist on a national level. Local level MOUs must originate with the Emergency Coordinator (EC) and must be approved and signed by the EC prior to their execution. MOUs transfer in-kind as new ECs are appointed unless specifically cancelled by the incoming EC. Agencies signatory to MOUs are referred to as "Served Agencies."

It is the intention of this plan to provide guidelines for training and usage of amateur radio volunteer communicators. The St. Charles County ARES organization recognizes the

role of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) to government agencies as auxiliary communications links during times of emergency. It is also the intention of this plan to provide for adequate training and preparation of ARES operators to assist with the needs of the local government communications as required. It is the recommendation of this plan that all ARES operators register with the local civil defense agency/agencies. This fulfills the mandatory registration requirements of Part 97 for RACES operators. It will also provide a larger contingent of qualified operators that may be utilized during emergencies. ARES operators should be prepared to assist any agency whether government or private sector as dictated by the needs of any given situation.

The Emergency Coordinator (EC) shall establish the training standards for new ARES volunteers and ensures that all new ARES operators complete a basic curriculum for emergency communications training.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to outline the ARES organization and present the basic information required for effective operation during an emergency. It may also contain addendums, which constitute the bulk of the "living document." This plan is intended to be updated periodically, on an as-needed basis.

This plan is not intended to be the "last word" in emergency operations, but to be a resource in planning and operations. Recommendations for training are presented as a guideline to establish minimum standards for qualifying amateurs as ARES operators. ARES operator training will include items established by the St. Charles County Division of Emergency Management for RACES operators. All training should be tailored to meet the needs of the agencies and communities served. Any additions, deletions or corrections affecting the St. Charles County should be brought to the attention of the Emergency Coordinator. All submissions will be given due consideration for inclusion in updates as they are released.

2. Organization

The field services leadership of the St. Charles County ARES is outlined as follows:

Emergency Coordinator: William Grimsbo, N0PNP, william.a.grimsbo@charter.net or William.a.grimsbo@gmail.com

Assistant Emergency Coordinator: Ken Humbertson, W0KAH, sabre49@gmail.com

Public Information Coordinator (PIC): TBD

Training Coordinator: TBD

3. Plan Activation

If a member station determines that a true emergency situation exists, every effort should be made to notify the EC so that information concerning an incident may be relayed through the ARES structure and formal net operations established. If the EC is unavailable, the assistant EC should be contacted and the chain of command should be followed. This does not preclude operators from contacting an emergency dispatch center or requesting assistance for smaller incidents, such as initial fire, medical, or traffic accident calls. Then, monitor the assigned Amateur frequencies. This would include repeater output frequencies and predetermined net frequencies. If electrical service to a repeater is interrupted, stations

should monitor the repeater output frequency or other predetermined simplex frequency, as directed by the leadership. All appointed OES stations shall monitor HF and VHF net frequencies if a declaration of emergency is imminent.

It is important that stations not interrupt existing emergency communications, but instead listen and only transmit if specific assistance is requested from that station or if a clear relay can be given in times of difficult copy. Stations should conform to established net protocols at all times. Deviating from established net procedures slows and confuses operations.

Calls for assistance from served agencies should be routed to the EC. This will result in the most efficient and appropriate response. Only under prior arrangements should individual ARES members "self dispatch" on their own. All ARES members shall have contact information for their leadership.

Alerting:

When an emergency arises the first knowledge of it is usually at the county level. The immediate response to an emergency is to call up local ARES members and begin establishing communications. This may be accomplished by the system described in this plan. As soon as this is accomplished, the EC should inform their DEC and/or SEC of the situation.

- The EC should be contacted by phone, if possible. In the event of any major disaster EC should monitor 145.490(-) or 444.475 (+) MHz for updates and information if the local communications are out. For everyone's assistance, the ARES roster (issued by the EC or designee) contains phone numbers, pagers, and E-mail addresses to facilitate communicating with them when the need arises. These additions are intended to enhance the ability of the ARES to provide communications assistance.

In the event of any widespread communications emergency, the EC should have an HF station monitoring 3.963 MHz or 7.263 MHz (If the EC does not have the license privileges or capability to operate on these HF frequencies, they should make arrangements with the AEC (assuming they have the necessary privileges) or appoint an Official Emergency Station (OES) within St. Charles County, which has this capability.

Wide Area Nets:

Operations have proven the need for wide-area administrative nets. Once emergency operations have begun and it is apparent that the State EOC will be involved, or that there will be more than one (1) county involved, an HF station should be included in the operation of the County Control Station (CCS). The CCS can provide a link to the State EOC and allow inter-county communications and the coordination of manpower and assistance from other areas. This also allows the EC to communicate directly with the area(s) involved.

EC Guidelines:

When an emergency exists within the county, or when the EC or AEC begins county-wide operations, the following operations guide will be followed:

1. The EC or AEC will not perform operations outside St. Charles County without the express consent of the District C DEC or the ADEC
2. The EC will be responsible for the following:
 - a. When there is an emergency in the county the EC is responsible for:
 - i. Determining the extent of the problem and evaluating their manpower needs
 - ii. Establishing operations based on the guidelines in this plan
 - iii. Notifying the DEC and/or ADEC of the emergency
 - iv. Establishing operating schedules and request assistance from the the DEC if required
 - vi. Keeping the DEC and the ADEC up to date on the situation in your county
 - vii. Keeping logs and lists of involved amateurs
 - viii. When operations are over, be sure all amateurs are notified and return home safely.
 - b. When notified of an emergency in another County or ARES District:
 - i. Be ready to assemble assistance from your county, if requested
 - ii. Notify your AEC's of the possible need to provide assistance to another area
 - iii. Maintain communications with the DEC and / or ADEC
 - iv. Notify the DEC and / or the ADEC of any changes in your location or any additional means of communicating with you
 - v. Notify the DEC and / or the ADEC of any changes that would affect contacting you
 - 1) Additional or different pager numbers
 - 2) Cell phone numbers
 - 3) Fax numbers
 - 4) Frequencies being used in your county.
 - c. When operations in the area are concluded be sure the following are accomplished prior to securing:
 - i. Make sure all ARES personnel are accounted for
 - ii. Pass along appreciation to all participants for their response
 - iii. Be sure all amateurs are notified that operations have concluded
 - iv. Collect reports and logs from your AEC's and control stations
 - v. Make recommendations for certificates
 - vi. File a report with the DEC and the ADEC

Personnel Notification:

The following criteria should be observed for all call-ups of ARES Personnel. Please be sure to notify ALL the proper people immediately. In the event that a person is not available, notify either the alternate or the immediate superior of that person. This is vital to insure the proper operation of Amateur Radio during an emergency.

Occurrence:

Public Service Events & Local Drills

Notify:

Notify St. Charles Co. ARES EC or AEC

Emergency in St. Charles County

Notify the St. Charles ARES EC or AEC, DEC/ADEC

Emergency Spreading to adjacent county

Notify the DEC / or ADEC and adjacent County EC

When St. Charles Co. needs assistance

Notify the DEC and/or ADEC

When requesting assistance, you will need to know the following information:

1. Number of amateurs required
2. How long will assistance be needed (you can estimate this)
3. What kind of equipment will be needed
4. What kind of physical and weather conditions they will be operating in.

Logging:

ALL STATIONS WILL MAINTAIN COMPLETE LOGS.

All fixed and mobile stations operating during an emergency must maintain a complete log of their operations. This log will contain the TIME (local) of each message, the CALL of the contacted station and MESSAGE CONTENT of the message. (ICS-309 Form)

A copy of all FORMAL TRAFFIC will be kept and become part of the log.

Each log sheet will contain the OPERATING CALLSIGN, the location of the station, the call of the operator and be signed by the control operator.

Mobiles should log the STATION CALLED, TIME, and brief CONTENT of each message. Each log should contain the operator's call sign and date and operator's signature.

ALL LOGS will be kept as a part of the ARES records. If an operator requires copies for his/her own log, copies should be made and the originals remain with the ARES EC.

All stations to fill out and return to the EC an ICs-214 form documenting their time and actions.

5. Training and Procedures

An annual test of the St. Charles County ARES will be conducted in conjunction with the National Simulated Emergency Test (SET). This test will be conducted at various levels throughout the district. It is also recommended that local exercises be held as determined to be appropriate and coordinated with local agency participation whenever possible. It is recommended that one exercise annually in addition to SET be held to exercise interoperability and cross-jurisdictional response protocols.

The ARRL has provided courses for Emergency Communications training and certification. The courses are presented in two levels. The Basic course (EC-001) is highly recommended as the basic training standard for new ARES members in St. Charles County. It is recommended that ARES leadership in the county complete through Advanced level (EC-016). New ARES members are encouraged to complete the level 1 training in the Missouri ARES Skills Book within one year of registration with ARES. ARES leadership should complete level 3 of the ARES Skills Book. Information on skills training and a download of the fillable Missouri Section ARES Skills Book can be found at <https://ares-mo.org/forms/missouri-ares-skills-book/> .

In addition, the following courses (except IS-802) are included in the ARES skills book and are considered requirements by the St. Charles County Region Emergency Management

FEMA Course #	Description
IS-100	Introduction to Incident Command System
IS-200a	ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
IS-700	National Incident Management System – An Introduction
IS-800B	National Response Framework, An Introduction
IS-802	Emergency Support Functions (ESF) #2 - Communications

Additional tests, drills, nets, and training will be carried out as directed by the EC or AEC. These sessions allow tailoring of training requirements to the specific needs of the areas and served agencies. Consideration should be given to the needs of adjacent areas for maintaining a high state of readiness for mutual aid support. It is recommended that neighboring jurisdictions be invited to participate in any exercises with the authorization of the DEC or ADEC.

6. Directed Net Operations

Directed nets are the backbone of the ARES traffic handling operation. Directed nets operate with a net control station (NCS) which maintains order on the net. Stations not directly involved with the operation of a directed net should stand by until the net is clear. At no time will a station transmit on a directed net except when called upon by the NCS, when checking in during a non-roll call period or when a station has bona fide emergency or priority traffic.

Most net operations relating to emergencies are “tactical” in nature. They are generally directed nets and messages sent can be qualified as any exchange that does not utilize an established message format or form. The NTS message format should be utilized whenever practical or the ICS-213 form as directed by the AHJ. ARES personnel should be proficient in the use of the ICS-213 Message Form, the ICS-214 Unit Log and the ICS-309

Radio Log Form. Good operating technique and keeping a log of your operation is of primary importance. Remember, it is the AHJ needs that will determine what forms and procedures will be used in any given situation.

7. Emergency Nets and Frequency Usage

The following frequencies are utilized within St. Charles County, District C and the Missouri Section ARES. for organized emergency nets. Contact may be attempted on these frequencies in the event that you are cut off from commercial telecommunications. Listen before transmitting! If an emergency net is in progress, do not interrupt! Monitor the frequency and follow the directions of the net control station.

HF (Missouri Section)

The Missouri Emergency Services Net meets weekly following the Missouri Traffic Net on Sunday at 2:30pm local time.

Frequency Net Name

3963.0 kHz. Missouri Emergency Services Net (MESN)

7263.0 kHz. Missouri Emergency Services Net (MESN) (daytime alternate)

VHF / UHF Repeater Systems

VHF or UHF repeaters serve St. Charles County. This may be a viable means of contacting a desired person or someone who can in turn contact that person for you. ARES members are strongly encouraged to obtain a listing of the available repeaters BEFORE an emergency occurs. An up-to-date list of coordinated repeaters in the District C is available on a website maintained by the Missouri Repeater Council (www.missourirepeater.org). St. Charles County systems are in the following table:

Frequency (MHz)/Offset	CTCSS	Description
145.490(-)	141.3Hz	W0ECA - St. Charles County ARES
145.410(-)	100.0 Hz	RBARC - St Charles County ARES Backup
444.475(+)	141.3 Hz	W0ECA UHF Tactical Repeater
444.275(+)	DMR Only	RBARC UHF

VHF / UHF Simplex Frequencies:

The Missouri section utilizes a set of predetermined simplex frequencies for "event or scene of action" operations. Use of the simplex mode minimizes exposure to power interruption, but also shortens effective communications range in most cases. The assigned frequencies in St. Charles County are listed as follows:

146.520 (CSQ) – VHF National Calling Frequency
446.000 (CSQ) – UHF National Calling Frequency

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The following are the MOARES Interoperability channel assignments for the St. Charles County:

VHF Primary: 146.595 (100Hz TX) Charlie – HVTAC7
VHF Secondary: 146.505 (100Hz TX) Foxtrot - HVTAC6
UHF Primary: 446.075 (100Hz TX) – HUTAC7
UHF Secondary: 446.100 (100Hz TX) – HUTAC8

It is also suggested to try on the above repeaters and national simplex calling frequencies if contact is not made on the frequencies outlined above.