

Appendix A: Standard Operating Procedures for All Mecklenburg Co. ARES Members

The following items constitute the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for all Mecklenburg County ARES members. This section is intended to be used as a quick reference during all emergency communication activities.

Mobilization Procedures and Equipment Checklists

During an emergency follow the mobilization procedures mentioned in the *Mecklenburg County ARES Emergency Plan*. In a nutshell, you should monitor the primary activation frequency for detailed instructions on how you can assist with the emergency.

Here are the primary activation (or “call up”) frequencies that will be used by Mecklenburg Co. ARES during an ARES mobilization (to include drills or real emergencies):

- ◆ Primary Activation Frequency: 146.940 MHz (-600Khz) (Tone 118.8) W4BFB Repeater
- ◆ Backup Activation Frequency: 145.290 MHz (-600Khz) (Tone 118.8) W4BFB Repeater
- ◆ Backup Activation Frequency: 146.940 MHz Simplex
- ◆ Backup Activation Frequency: 145.290 MHz Simplex

Upon notification of activation we will activate the Mecklenburg ARES Net on the above mentioned frequencies. Details will then be directed to all amateurs on action to be taken via this net. All coordination efforts and secondary nets will be directed from the primary activation frequency unless otherwise directed by an ARES official. Liaison or gateway stations will be established to communicate between nets on different frequencies.

The following information comes from *The ARES Field Resources Manual*, Page 5, 6 and 8 (published by ARRL) with some additional comments from this author. These items should be used as guides on how to react to a mobilization:

What to do FIRST during an emergency

1. Check that you and your family are safe and secure BEFORE you respond as an ARES volunteer.
2. Check that your property is safe and secure before responding as an ARES volunteer.
3. Monitor 146.940 MHz. If the repeater has failed we will initiate a simplex net either on this frequency or make announcements to move the secondary repeater.
4. Follow instructions you receive from your local ARES officials in charge (EC, AEC, NCS, etc.) on the above frequency.

Your Initial Action Checklist

1. Be ready to operate. Check equipment and connections and be prepared to mobilize as soon as possible.
2. Check-in with the Mecklenburg ARES Net when called. Deploy to assignment with your “Ready Kit”.
3. Obtain a tactical call sign for your location/assignment, if relevant. This will be an alias assigned to you by Mecklenburg Co. ARES officials. (i.e., MEDIC communications may be given the tactical call sign CMED to expedite communications). You are still required to ID every 10 minutes with you own call sign, but don't overdo it. The idea here is that operators may change at an assignment, but the assignment stays the same. This will alleviate some burden on the NCS or ARES official to track who is where constantly.
4. Initiate personal event log (there is a form available for this in the *ARES Field Resources Manual*)
5. Enter assigned frequencies on your log sheet. Be sure to submit this log to an AEC, EC or NCS after you close your station. If you are being relieved by another operator hand this log off to him.
6. Use your log form to record messages handled.
7. Use a formal message form when a precise record is required.
8. Use tactical call sign for your location, while observing FCC's ten-minute identification rules.
9. Monitor your assigned frequency at ALL TIMES. Notify NCS if you have to leave.

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Basic Deployment Equipment Checklist

- 2m HT or Mobile 2m radio with adequate power supply (or battery)
- 2m mag mount antenna and coax
- Ear Phones/ Hand Microphone
- Paper and Pencil
- ARES ID Card
- Other Official ID with Photograph (NC Driver's License, etc.)
- Any FEMA Incident Command System certificates for classes completed
- Extra Batteries
- Appropriate Clothing
- Food and Water
- Message forms, logs
- This Manual

Note: For deployments longer in duration than one day, consult the *ARES Field Resources Manual* for further detailed instructions and equipment checklists.

You should consider having a "Ready Kit" that is available for immediate deployment at any time. This is something that you could simply pick up and walk out the door on a moment's notice that would allow you to participate at a minimum level. Consult the *ARES Field Resources Manual* for some good ideas on what to put in this kit.

Frequencies and modes our unit plans to use

The list below describes the entire suite of frequencies that we may use to provide emergency communications on an as-needed basis:

- 146.940- (118.8) repeater (W4BFB) - Metrolina 2m Emergency Net™ & Mecklenburg ARES Net™
- 145.290- (118.8) repeater (W4BFB) - Backup repeater for the Metrolina 2m Emergency Net™, Mecklenburg ARES Net™ & Piedmont Spotter Group Net™
- 145.230- (118.8) repeater (W4BFB) - Piedmont Spotter Group Net™ and Charlotte Regional SKYWARN Net™
- 147.060- (82.5) repeater (W4CQ) - Secondary Tactical Net or Traffic Net
- 444.450+ (82.5) repeater (W4CQ) - Hornet's Nest Net™ & Secondary Tactical Net or Traffic Net
- 147.505 simplex – Mecklenburg Simplex Net™ & Secondary Tactical Net or Traffic Net
- 146.580 simplex - Mecklenburg ARES Secondary Tactical Net or Traffic Net
- 444.675+ repeater (W4CQ) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 442.125+ (156.7) repeater (WT4IX) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 444.350+ (118.8) repeater (K4KAY) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 444.600+ (118.8) repeater (W4BFB) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 444.675+ repeater (W4WBT) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 444.950+ (136.5) repeater (WA1WXL) - Disaster Logistics or Tactical Frequency
- 3923 kHz / 7232 kHz - Tar Heel Emergency Net™

Disaster Scene Traveling Tips

While performing ARES duties, members may be required to travel by vehicle to various locations throughout a disaster-stricken area. The following travel tips are mentioned to keep personal safety as a top priority of the ARES member at all times:

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- Do not attempt to move downed power lines that block a road way. Report the problem to your ARES official or ARES Resource Net.
- Do not attempt to cross flooded roadways. Find an alternate route instead. Water covering roadways may be deeper than it appears, as well as having dangerous under currents that can move an automobile. Report the flooding to your local ARES official or ARES Resource Net, especially if this route is critical to recovery efforts.
- Report fallen trees blocking critical roadways to your local ARES official. Only attempt to move the obstacle if you have the equipment, man-power, knowledge and capacity to do so.

Mecklenburg Co. ARES Activation Procedures

Should you ever be contacted by a served agency requesting an ARES activation, below are our basic procedures to respond to this request. If you are the first ARES member contacted for an emergency, you will be assigned the role of “**First Caller**”. You should use the following items as guidelines when taking further action.

1. The First Caller is responsible for determining what level of ARES response is required: **ROUTINE** or **IMMEDIATE**

A. **Routine Response** - This occurs when there is adequate lead time before an emergency to prepare for forthcoming conditions. The served agency is contacting you to post notice of a forthcoming emergency.

B. **Immediate Response** - This occurs when a served agency requests ARES to immediately activate a net and assign a liaison to their agency as soon as possible.

2. Based upon the decision made above the First Caller should respond with the following actions:

A. **Routine Response** - In this case, the served agency should contact the EC and allow him/her to handle the ARES activation. The EC will assess the event, contact the appropriate AEC(s) and begin the activation procedures.

B. **Immediate Response** - Our response to this type of request will be for the First Caller to take the necessary information via telephone and either INITIATE or RELAY this request to the Mecklenburg ARES Net. (See sample net preamble and procedures in Appendix D for activating this net) This First Caller should immediately contact the EC and/or AECs for a full ARES mobilization. In the case of being the first station to activate the Mecklenburg ARES Net, this ARES member is responsible for handling the net until an ARES official or ARES NCS can relieve their station.

If they cannot reach the EC or AECs, the First Caller should contact the Authorized Alert Stations (listed in Appendix B) to initiate the telephone call up activation procedures. If these stations cannot be reached, the First Caller should solicit help to perform this function via the Mecklenburg ARES Net.

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Here is the information you will need to take from the served agency:

Immediate Response Checklist

Time _____ Date _____

1. Who has made the call? _____

2. What agency do they represent? _____

3. What type of an event is it? _____

4. Who is the contact person? _____

5. How can the contact person be reached? _____

6. Where is the contact person? _____

Directions: _____