

Mecklenburg County ARES[®]

ARES Field Resources Manual 1

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)

*The ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment for communications duty in the public interest when disaster strikes. Membership in ARRL or any other local or national organization is not required to join ARES or participate in ARES activities. ARRL membership is, however, required for the leadership appointments described here. Because ARES is an Amateur Radio service, only licensed amateurs are eligible for membership.*¹

The NC ARES is organized slightly differently that described in the ARES Field Resources Manual. NC ARES appointments parallel the Emergency Management structure of NC . There are four levels in both of these organization — State, branch, district and county.

State Level – ARES Section

Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) – Appointed by the ARRL NC Section Manager

Branch Level

Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator (ASEC) - appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator

District Level

District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) - appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator
Mecklenburg County is in Area 13, which includes Union, Mecklenburg, Gaston, Lincoln, Catawba, Cleveland and Burke counties.

Local Level

County Emergency Coordinator (EC) - appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator
Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC)- appointed by the County Emergency Coordinator.

*Most of the ARES organization and operation gets accomplished at the local level. The local level is where most emergencies occur and where ARES leaders make direct contact with the ARES member-volunteers and with officials of the agencies to be served. The local EC is therefore the key contact in the ARES.*¹

Types of Emergency Nets

Tactical Net — *The Tactical Net is the front line net employed during an incident, usually used by a single government agency to coordinate with Amateur Radio operations within their jurisdiction. There may be several tactical nets in operation for a single incident depending on the volume of traffic and number of agencies involved. Communications include traffic handling and resource recruiting.*

Resource Net — *For larger-scale incidents, a Resource Net is used to recruit operators and equipment in support of operations on the Tactical Nets. As an incident requires more operators or equipment, the Resource Net evolves as a check-in place for volunteers to register and receive assignments.*

Command Net — *As the size of an incident increases and more jurisdictions become involved in the incident, a Command Net may become necessary. This net allows the incident managers to communicate with each other to resolve inter- or intra-agency problems, particularly between cities or within larger jurisdictional areas. It is conceivable that this net could become cluttered with a high volume of traffic. It may also be necessary to create multiple command nets to promote efficiency.*

Open and Closed Nets — *A net may operate as an open or “free form” net, or as a closed net where a net control station (NCS) is used to control the flow of transmissions on the channel. Typically, when the amount of traffic is low or sporadic, a net control isn’t required and an open net is used. Stations merely listen before they transmit. When a net is declared a “closed” net, then all transmissions must be directed by the NCS.¹*

¹ - ARES Field Resources Manual

<http://www.ncarrl.org/ares/>