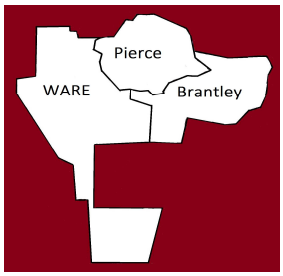
Tri-County ARES®

Pierce, Ware, Brantley

Emergency Communications Plan



ARRL GEORGIA SECTION
Southeast District

Updated: 21 July, 2014 **Richard J. Lutzinger, KD6ZR**

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Tri-County
Pierce, Ware, Brantley

Amateur Radio Emergency Service
Communications Plan
Effective July 21, 2014

American Radio Relay League

Pierce, Ware, Brantley Counties
Southeast District
Georgia Section

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Tri-County
Pierce, Ware, Brantley

AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
PLAN

1. PURPOSE

To implement Part 97.1 of the FCC regulations, and Federal and international treaty law applying to Amateur Radio in the Georgia Section, Southeast District and Pierce, Ware and Brantley Counties.

The rules and regulations in Part 97.1 are designed to provide an amateur radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in the following principles: Regulation and enhancement of the value of the Amateur Radio Service to the public as a voluntary non-commercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.

The primary responsibility of the Tri-County Amateur Radio Emergency Service, (ARES), is to provide effective and efficient communications in the event of a natural or manmade disaster or emergency involving any major threat to life or property, to supplement normal communications, or in the event of communications failures to provide the necessary communications links where applicable and provide communications in support of public service events when asked.

2. SERVED AGENCIES

The following agencies and entities may be served during an emergency, event or situation requiring supplemental communications: Any county, state or local government agency, any hospital, a public safety agency including but not limited to: Fire/Rescue, Emergency Operations Center, Sheriff's or Police Dept., American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and any other agencies or not-for-profit entities requesting assistance from Tri-County ARES.

3. INTRODUCTION

Tri-County ARES is composed of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio Operators who have voluntarily registered their capabilities and equipment for public service communications duty.

Tri-County ARES functions under this Emergency Plan under the direction of the Tri-County Emergency Coordinator, who is appointed by the ARRL Georgia Section Emergency Coordinator in consultation the Southeast District Emergency Coordinator (DEC).

4. ORGANIZATION

The following positions are in accordance with the Georgia Section Emergency Plan:

Emergency Coordinator (EC)

The EC is the chief ARES official in the County, and is directly responsible to the DEC. The duties of EC require a serious commitment of time and effort by the volunteer who accepts this position. The EC serves at the pleasure of the (SEC) or (SM) but works closely and under direction of the (DEC). The EC organizes and coordinates Amateur Radio communications in the county to accommodate the needs of the agencies served.

The EC's duties in a medium-to-large county are many and complex. No EC can do everything himself. To assist him, he can delegate duties to Assistant ECs (AECs). The EC may appoint as many AECs as are needed to effectively manage and develop an effective organization. AEC appointments do not need approval by any other ARES official. AECs need not be ARRL members, but are encouraged to join. When necessary a person may hold more than one AEC responsibility area. AEC's serve at the pleasure of the EC and their appointments lapse when the EC resigns or is replaced, though any or all of the same individuals may be reappointed by the new EC at that EC's discretion.

Following are typical program areas held by AEC's in ARES organizations. These AEC program areas may be held by one or more individuals or performed by the EC in smaller organizations. These positions may or may not currently be assigned by the EC.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Operations

The AEC for Operations acts as the assistant to the EC for all operational matters and assumes command in the absence of or by direction of the EC.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Training

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, preparing training sessions, lesson plans, and arranging for training from outside agencies. Track volunteer training in a master training roster and completing updates to this and other plans including frequency plans.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Public Relations

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, providing media notification for ARES and amateur radio functions and promoting ARES events. The AEC for Public Relations serves as the organizations PIO.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Digital Services
Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, setting up and maintaining digital communications capability within the Tri-County area and acting as digital communications liaison with other counties.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Administration
Responsibilities includes, but are not limited to, keeping records, making reports, maintaining a supply of forms, and disseminating special notifications and notices to members at the direction of the EC.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Membership
Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruiting and maintaining membership rosters.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Logistics
Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, Transportation, Supplies (food, fuel, water, and etc.), and Equipment (generators, batteries, antennas, etc.) and keeping organization equipment in a ready condition.

Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) – Net Management
Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, recruit and train a sufficient number of operators capable of sustaining 24/7 voice net control operations, make best use of amateur infrastructure to conduct effective voice net operations, evaluate network traffic and make adjustments to traffic flow as necessary, enforce net discipline, train operators in proper message handling, and provide status reports and resource needs to the EC.

5. ***NETS AND FREQUENCIES***

The Tri-County ARES Training Net will be called every Tuesday evening at 1930 hours local time by the Net Control Station (NCS) and at such other times as appropriate to the situation. At the discretion of the EC or the Net Manager the net may be canceled to accommodate special circumstances such as the regular scheduled net falling on a holiday, etc.

Members of the Tri-County ARES check into the net from their mobile stations, portable stations and home stations for practice and in the case of an actual emergency to pass traffic, provide communications links and to be available for further instructions and direction.

The following frequencies and nets are established and available for use by Tri-County ARES: *(See Appendix B)*

The primary Tri-County ARES Net is 145.270 MHz, 141.3 Tone. If this repeater is down, operations will shift to 145.370 MHZ, 141.3 tone or 146.445 MHz simplex as directed by Net Control.

The 147.255 MHz, 141.3 tone Repeater is a third backup and digital operations repeater.

Tri-County ARES has established 147.445 MHz as the VHF simplex and digital frequency.

The Region “M” Hospitals have established 146.565 MHz as their main simplex frequency.

The Net Manager will coordinate with the Georgia Section Statewide HF Net (Primary SSB Frequency: 3975 KHz). Backup is 7275 KHz. Digital Operations at 3583 KHz and CW operations at 3549 KHz.

6. ACTIVATING THE PLAN

Any member of the Tri-County ARES who for any reason believes that a communications emergency exists should monitor the assigned primary net frequency 145.270 MHz, the secondary net frequency 145.370 MHz, or the simplex frequency 146.445 MHz, for activity.

If local telephone service is available, the EC and/or assistant ECs should be notified by telephone of the existence of any event that could conceivably require net activation.

The Tri-County ARES organization will be alerted by any official of the local Hospital, Tri-County government, the Red Cross, any Tri-County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or other official.

7. ARES MOBILIZATION PROCEDURE

Mobilization will be initiated by the Tri-County EC, or an AEC under direction of the EC. Instructions will be given with directions for stations to be dispatched to operating locations, assembly areas or the situation site as appropriate. Net control will be handled from a location designated or approved by the EC.

Members will normally be called by telephone and backup will be by email if activation is required or suspected. The Tri-County ARES website will also indicate the level of ARES activation at all times. All members should make sure the EC has their current contact information on file.

When notification, or knowledge, that a communications emergency exists, members of the Tri-County ARES will monitor the Tri-County ARES Emergency Net on the 145.270 MHz repeater with 145.370 MHz repeater as the back-up repeater and 146.445 MHz simplex as an alternate frequency.

The (DEC) or (SEC) will be notified of all county ARES activations by telephone or any other means available by the Tri-County EC or an AEC.

See Appendix “A” of this plan for specific considerations.

8. OPERATIONS

All written messages for the NTS must be in standard ARRL format using the approved ARRL transmission and receipt protocol and message forms.

The use of local message forms will be dictated by the served agency or EC and will usually follow ICS form standards. Commonly used forms such as ICS-213, ARRL Message forms and communications log forms should be brought to the incident by the ARES Communicator. These forms are not provided by the Served Agency.

Operators will be assigned to operating locations by the EC or an AEC.

Tri-County ARES may use several operational modes as a normal means of communications including but not limited to: HF Voice SSB, VHF FM Voice, UHF FM Voice, Digital Sound Card Modes including NBEMS and WL2K using RMS Express/Winmore.

Operators are dispatched as needed to Hospitals, Nursing Homes and assigned shelters and all other agencies as required. Operators of home stations will be coordinated to effectively operate as required by the situation.

See Appendix “A” of this plan for specific considerations.

9. DRILLS, TRAINING AND EXERCISES

All drills, training and instruction will be planned and executed to ensure maximum readiness and capability to respond expeditiously and to provide effective and efficient Federal Communications Commission licensed radio operator volunteers for emergency communications whenever an occasion may arise.

The EC may conduct a Simulated Emergency Test (S.E.T.) in October in conjunction with the nationwide ARRL Simulated Emergency Test.

ARES members will also participate in other drills and tests sponsored by Tri-County ARES or served agencies, The National Weather Service and other entities in which ARES is requested to participate by providing communications.

Online Training is available through the Tri-County ARES Website at http://www.piercecountyares.com and on the FEMA online course site at http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp All Tri-County ARES members are encouraged to take the IS-100.b and IS-700.a courses as minimum training.

10. ***ALERT LEVELS***

These are the activation levels used by Tri-County ARES which are compatible with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. *(See Appendix C)*

Level Three (3) – No Activation: Level 3 is typically a "monitoring" phase. ARES leadership and members should be monitoring any potential threat that could possibly cause activation as they go about their routine business.

Level Two (2) – Partial Activation: This is an on-alert status which could mean partial activation or the need to open informal or formal nets to inform members or assemble resources.

Level One (1) – Full Activation: This is full-scale activation. Selected members will be activated and formal nets will be established.

APPENDIX A

INITIAL ACTION CHECK-LIST

1. Be prepared to operate. Check all equipment and connections.
2. Have your personal and ARES ID with you.
3. Deploy to assignment with “Ready” kit fully stocked with the needs of your particular position. Including equipment and personal comfort items.
4. Check-in with your assigned contact.
5. Obtain tactical call sign for your location/assignment.
6. Initiate personal event log.
7. Enter assigned frequency(s) on log sheet and on emergency/frequency plan.
8. Use log form to record messages handled.
9. Use a formal message form when a precise record is required and for all third party traffic.
10. Use tactical call sign for your location, while observing FCC’s ten-minute ID rule.
11. Monitor your assigned frequency **AT ALL TIMES**. Notify NCS if you have to leave.
12. Follow net procedures.
13. **Have previously studied the Operations Manual and become familiar with the procedures contained therein. Know what to do, and how to be part of the solution to the problem and not a part of it.**

APPENDIX B

Tri-County ARES Frequency Plan

Radio TX Frequency	Radio RX Frequency	Tone Frequency	Comments
144.670	145.270	141.3	Primary EmComm Repeater
144.770	145.370	141.3	Back-up EmComm Repeater
147.855	147.255	141.3	Back-up EmComm and Digital Operations
146.040	146.640	141.3	Ware County Repeater
442.025	442.025	141.3	70 cm Back-up EmComm Repeater
146.445	146.445	None	Simplex Frequency Voice
147.445	147.445	None	Simplex Frequency Digital Modes
28.469	28.469	None	Tri-County 10m HF Voice
7.269	7.269	None	Tri-County 40m HF Voice
3.969	3.969	None	Tri-County 75m HF Voice
146.565	146.565	None	Region “M” Hospital Simplex Freq.
3.5915 (WX4J)	3.591.5	None	WL2K Winmore Link (St. Johns co. Fl.)
7.0795 (KD4NUE)	7.0795	None	WL2K Winmore Link (Brunswick Ga.)
3.975	3.975	None	Georgia Section SSB EmComm Freq.
7.275	7.275	None	Georgia Section SSB EmComm Freq.
3.583	3.583	None	Georgia Section Digital EmComm Freq.
3.549	3.549	None	Georgia Section CW EmComm Freq.

APPENDIX C

ARES ACTIVATION LEVELS

Level 1 (Red)	Full Scale Activation	ARES Operators have been notified of a full-scale activation. ARES Operators need to report to and staff their assigned locations in support of Served Agencies.
Level 2 (Yellow)	Partial Activation	ARES Members will be placed on standby. ARES leadership may be asked to meet with served agencies and plans will be put in place for activation should it be required. Nets may need to be activated.
Level 3 (Green)	Normal Activities	ARES is operating under normal day-to-day operations. Members are monitoring events and conducting routine training.