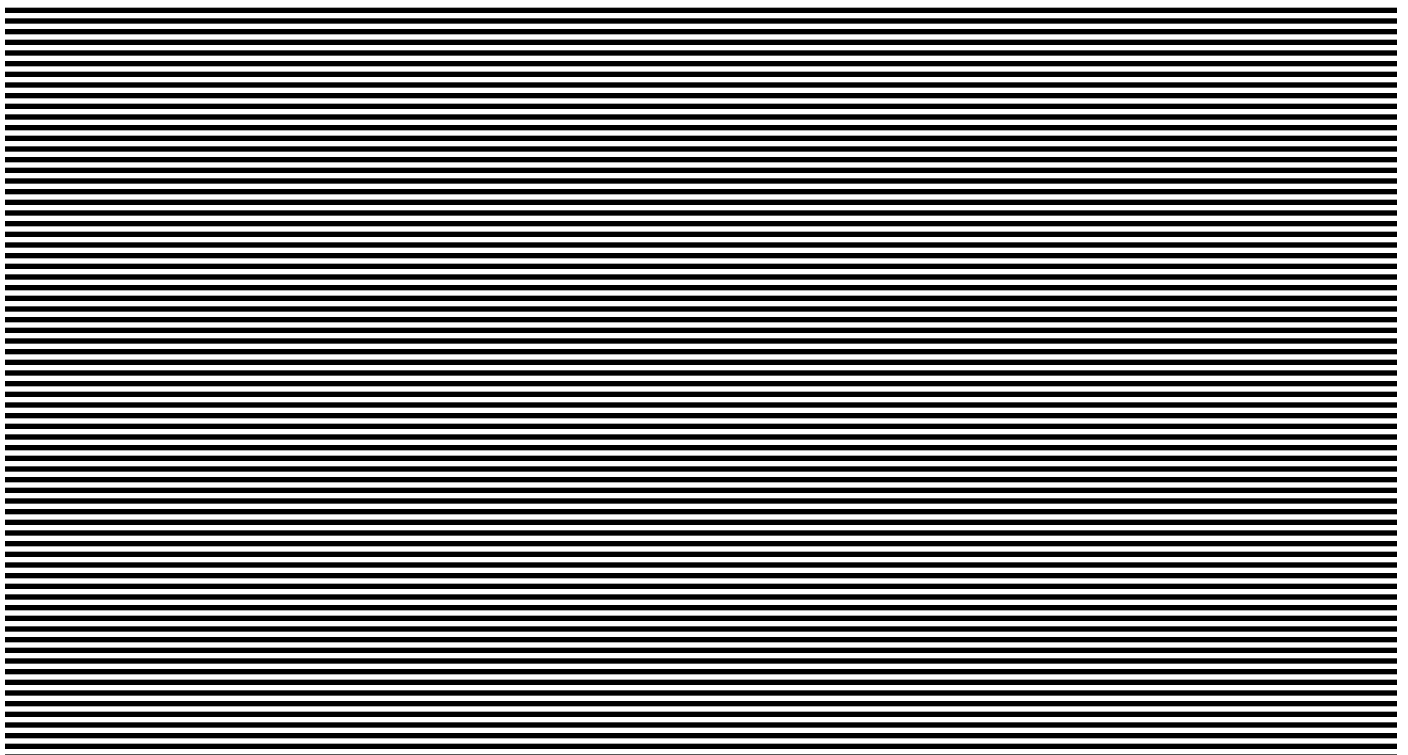


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Statement of Understanding Between  
The American Radio Relay League, Inc.,  
and The American National Red Cross



# Statement of Understanding Between The American Radio Relay League, Inc., and The American National Red Cross

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## Foreword

The American Radio Relay League, Inc., and The American National Red Cross have had cooperative statements of understanding since 1940. The original statement of understanding was updated in 1964 and 1974.

The American Radio Relay League, Inc., (ARRL) is a noncommercial association of radio amateurs, bonded for the promotion of interest in amateur radio communication and experimentation, for the relaying of messages by radio, for the advancement of the radio art, for the representation of the radio amateur in legislative matters, for the maintenance of fraternalism, and for a high standard of “on the air” operating conduct. A primary responsibility of the Amateur Radio Service, as established by Part 97 of the Federal Communications Commission’s regulations, is the performance of public service communications for the general public, particularly in times of emergency when normal communications are not available. Using amateur radio operators on frequencies allocated to the Amateur Radio Service, the ARRL has been in the forefront of this service, direct to the general public and through government and relief agencies, and continues to be so. To that end, in 1935, the ARRL organized the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps, now called the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and in 1949, the ARRL created the National Traffic System (NTS). Together, ARES and NTS comprise the ARRL’s public service field organization of volunteer radio amateurs.

Red Cross chapters are responsible for establishing, coordinating, and maintaining continuity of communications during disaster relief operations whenever normal communications channels are disrupted or overloaded. This document revises, strengthens, and updates previous statements of understanding. It also renews and strengthens the status of close cooperation and coordination between the two organizations for the public benefit.

## I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to state the terms of understanding between the American Radio Relay League, Inc., and The American National Red Cross. This document will serve as a broad framework within which volunteer ARES and NTS personnel of the ARRL will coordinate amateur radio emergency

communications networks, equipment, and personnel with the Red Cross for disaster relief communications. Included are all disasters, except those caused by enemy action or acts of war.

## II. Definition of Disaster

A disaster is an occurrence such as a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, earthquake, blizzard, fire, explosion, volcanic eruption, building collapse, commercial transportation accident, or other situation that causes human suffering or human needs that the victims cannot alleviate without assistance.

## III. Recognition

The American Red Cross recognizes that the extensive volunteer field organization of the ARRL, because of its technical training and emergency communications readiness, can render valuable aid in maintaining the continuity of communications during disasters, when normal communications facilities are disrupted or overloaded.

The American Radio Relay League recognizes the American Red Cross as a primary disaster relief service agency, chartered by Congress, through which the American people voluntarily extend assistance to individuals and families in need after the occurrence of any disaster.

## IV. Authority of the American Red Cross

By congressional charter dated January 5, 1905, The American National Red Cross was designated a nationwide agency through which the American people voluntarily extend assistance to individuals and families in need as a result of disaster. In part, the charter provides that the Red Cross shall—

continue and carry on a system of national and international relief in time of peace and apply the same in mitigating the suffering caused by pestilence, famine, fire, floods, and other great national calamities, and devise and carry on measures for preventing the same.

## V. Organization of the American Red Cross

The national headquarters of the American Red Cross is located in Washington, D.C. National headquarters is responsible for implementing Corporate Regulations that govern Red Cross activities, for giving administrative and technical supervision and guid

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ance to service delivery units, and for maintaining financial control of the organization.

The chapter is the local unit of the American Red Cross and is responsible for all local Red Cross activities within its jurisdiction, subject to Corporate Regulations. There are approximately 2,000 chapters across the United States.

Each chapter is responsible for developing a disaster planning, preparedness, and relief organization composed of the best-qualified paid and volunteer staff available. The chapter disaster committee studies the disaster hazards of the locality and surveys local resources for personnel, equipment, supplies, transportation, emergency communications, and facilities available for disaster relief. The chapter disaster committee also formulates cooperative plans and procedures with local government agencies and private organizations for carrying on relief operations should a disaster occur. Through its nationwide organization, the Red Cross coordinates its total resources for use in large disasters.

## **VI. Organization of the American Radio Relay League**

The American Radio Relay League is governed by a Board of Directors composed of 15 persons who are elected by the membership. Its headquarters is located in Newington, Connecticut. Since 1914, the ARRL has been the standard-bearer in amateur radio affairs throughout the United States. The ARRL has a field organization that covers the United States and U.S. territories. The field organization is administered by elected Section Managers in the 69 ARRL sections (a section is an ARRL-created political boundary roughly equivalent to states or portions thereof). Emergency communications are provided by the ARRL-sponsored Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). Organized under the Section Manager and directed by a Section Emergency Coordinator, the ARES field organization consists of District Emergency Coordinators and local Coordinators, who provide leadership and training for the thousands of ARES members. Complementing the ARES is the National Traffic System (NTS). Organized under the Section Manager and directed by a Section Traffic Manager, NTS nets cover widespread as well as local areas. These nets function daily in the handling of formal message traffic. Working and training together, the ARES and NTS volunteers provide emergency

communications and message handling that is designed to meet the needs of any emergency situation.

## **VII. Method of Cooperation**

In order that the emergency communications facilities of the ARES and NTS may be coordinated and utilized to the fullest advantage during disasters, the American Red Cross and the American Radio Relay League have agreed to the following:

Through its national headquarters in Newington, Connecticut, the American Radio Relay League will establish regular liaison with American Red Cross national headquarters in Washington, D.C. This liaison will provide the closest possible cooperation and direct operational assistance by the ARRL in emergency communications planning and in the coordination of amateur radio communications facilities for disaster relief operations.

The American Red Cross welcomes the cooperation and assistance of the American Radio Relay League through its headquarters in Newington, Connecticut, and its field organization, to extend amateur radio emergency communications planning into the jurisdictions of the local chapters. Red Cross chapters will further this cooperative effort by requesting that local ARRL, ARES, and NTS personnel serve as Red Cross disaster volunteers for emergency communications. ARRL, ARES, and NTS volunteers will be encouraged to take part in predisaster planning and work with the local chapter to provide amateur radio communications equipment and volunteers and to meet the needs of the disaster communications plan.

Whenever there is a disaster requiring the use of amateur radio communications facilities, the Red Cross, through its local chapter or through the national sector, will request the assistance of the ARRL, ARES, and NTS near the scene of the disaster. This assistance may include:

1. The alerting and mobilization of ARRL amateur radio volunteer emergency communications personnel in accordance with a prearranged plan.
2. The establishment and maintenance of fixed, mobile, and portable station emergency communication facilities for local radio coverage and point-to-point contact between Red Cross officials and locations, as required.
3. Maintenance of the continuity of communications for the duration of the emergency period or

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until normal communications channels are substantially restored.

ARRL agrees to supply Red Cross with lists of local coordinators on an annual basis. Red Cross agrees to supply ARRL with chapter addresses and points of contact on an annual basis.

The ARRL recognizes that the American Red Cross, working with officials in the disaster area, may need to establish guidelines concerning the acceptance, transmission, and distribution of health-and-welfare (disaster welfare) traffic by amateur radio. Accordingly, the ARRL amateur radio emergency communications personnel will be encouraged to handle traffic in adherence to the guidelines provided by American Red Cross personnel in the disaster area.

The ARRL recognizes that Red Cross chapters not in the disaster area may have the need for health-and-welfare (disaster welfare) traffic by amateur radio. The ARRL will encourage ARES and NTS volunteers to work with Red Cross chapters to provide this service along guidelines established during any particular disaster.

The American Red Cross and the American Radio Relay League will cooperate in the development of a specific set of operational guidelines for the management of the health-and-welfare (disaster welfare) inquiry function both at the national and local levels. Copies of these guidelines will be distributed to local Red Cross chapters and ARRL field organization officials.

Detailed operating plans for the utilization of the communications facilities of the Amateur Radio Service will be developed by the local Red Cross chapter

in cooperation with local ARRL, ARES, and NTS personnel.

The American Red Cross will recommend to its chapters that membership on disaster preparedness and relief committees include representation from the ARRL through its local ARES and NTS organizations.

The American Red Cross will furnish local chapters with copies of this Statement of Understanding. Similarly, the American Radio Relay League will furnish copies to its field organization officials.

This agreement is in force as of the date indicated below, and shall remain in effect unless terminated by written notification from either party to the other.

George Wilson III  
President  
The American Radio Relay League, Inc.

William H. Reno  
Senior Vice President  
The American Red Cross

April 1, 1994