

Amateur Radio Hospital Emergency Communications (ARHEC) Process and Procedure



**Version 2.1
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Introduction

The Amateur Radio Hospital Emergency Communication (ARHEC) is an amateur radio service providing trained amateur radio operators who are members of an Amateur Radio Public Service Corps (ARPSC) serving a State, County, or Municipality with a photo ID issued by the governmental agency.

Mission

Support communications for a medical facility providing emergency communications that are critical to patient health and facility welfare.

Objective

Develop the ARPSC – ARHEC program into a fully integrated medical communications team at medical facilities to provide timely and accurate information to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) of the State, County, or Municipality being served.

ARHEC - ARPSC Organizational Structure

On the pages that follow, we will outline the ARHEC – Amateur Radio Public Service Corps (ARPSC) structure. An ARPSC Organization may be established at the municipal, county and state level. Refer to MIARPSC Guidelines Document at www.mi-arpesc.org

The ARHEC System is coordinated throughout a state structure of Districts, Regions, County, or Municipality.

See Annex A-1 of the ARHEC Process and Procedure for ARHEC Structure.

Infrastructure

- Regional Medical Control Authority (MCA) provides information to the local ARHEC Coordinator about which medical facility will be equipped for ARHEC.
- MCA reviews cost and installation per ARHEC requirements, develops budgets and purchases equipment.

Infrastructure (cont.)

- MCA, ARHEC, and a facility representative will survey the medical facility, and consult on location of the radio station. This survey will also advise hospital personnel for the provided antenna installation and additional materials (coax cable, connectors, etc.) as needed to complete ARHEC station setup; also at this time, the ARHEC Process and Procedure will be reviewed if needed. The ARHEC station location must have an access to the facility emergency/backup power source.
- ARHEC will install or provide assistance in the final installation of the radio equipment when the antenna and cable are installed.
- ARHEC is a team process at each medical facility. There is a team leader and 5 to 6 team members. The team leader develops a monthly schedule for the year of when a team member is to do a check in. The team leader also is the person that the ARHEC Coordinator works with.

ARHEC Policies

- ARHEC operators will present a professional image in appearance whenever possible (Neat & Clean). Regardless of the time of day or night the amateur radio operators are activated, appearance and actions should always be positive.
- Operators should present a professional image by avoiding confrontation with Security & Hospital Staff. If there is a problem, remove yourself from the facility and check in from your vehicle, home base station, or phone. It is important that we remember that we are in their "home" and have to play by their rules and we should not disturb them from their work. Contact the ARHEC Hospital Coordinator or their assistant as soon as possible (within 24 hrs) to report the incident. The incident will be reviewed and resolved by the State, County, or Municipality ARHEC Hospital Coordinator, hospital staff, and the ARHEC Director as necessitated.
- Not more than 2 ARHEC operators should be at a station, exceptions to this requires an approval from the ARPSC - ARHEC Hospital Coordinator/Specialty Officer, their Assistant or Emergency Coordinator (EC).

ARHEC Policies (cont.)

- During the ARHEC net, the amateur operator should also check for any mechanical or electrical defects, and let the State, County, or Municipality ARHEC Hospital Coordinator know exactly what the problem is, missing equipment such as ARHEC Station Manual, radio laminated instructions, does radio show signs of tampering?...is there any physical damage to equipment?
- ARHEC station operators are to use the medical facilities name i.e. Huron Valley Sinai, Commerce Township, Oakland. This is a tactical call sign: it describes FACILITY and LOCATION. When ending each transmission the operator's call sign is required. This serves 2 important functions:
 1. It tells the Net Control Station your transmission is complete
 2. It fulfills FCC requirements
- The Hospital Net is a directed net by the Net Control Operator. Hospitals report in via roll call from Net Control Operators. Net Control will provide directions for different operating modes as needed. Net Control will provide the State, County, or Municipality ARHEC Hospital Coordinator with a written report of results from the Hospital Net.

Procedures

- The governing EOC (County, Districts or State ARPSC) is directed to activate a controlled net at least once a month to do a roll call of medical facilities equipped with ARHEC radios. This net is required to operate from the governing EOC quarterly.
- The governing EOC contact, the ARPSC EC, or the State, County, or Municipality ARHEC Hospital Coordinator will send out an email to the facilities staff contact as a reminder to expect the ARHEC operators for the volunteers' monthly net.
- ARHEC radio operators will report to their designated hospital before the scheduled net time and inspect the station's connections using the laminated instruction card attached to the radio or in the station binder to insure that all wires and cables are installed correctly before activating the station.

Procedures (cont.)

- Hospital personnel can verify radio volunteers by their ARPSC photo ID and/or the RACES photo identification card provided by Michigan State Police Department of Homeland Security.
- Hospital personnel shall provide access to the radio and validate/provide tokens for parking or direct amateur radio operator to restricted parking area.
- The ARHEC radio system is intended only for emergency communications that are critical to patient health and facility welfare. Use requires an amateur radio license, granted by United States Federal Communication Commission (FCC).
- Personal messages are not permitted on the ARHEC System. The National Traffic System (NTS) is designed to send these types of messages.
- Messages about patents, list of people names, status of survivors, anything that releases personal sensitive information, is not allowed over verbal transmissions. Where equipped with digital data transmission through a computer database, some selected information may be transmitted per Medical Facility directions.
- If the ARHEC station is inoperative, the State, County, or Municipality ARHEC Hospital Coordinator, or the Assistant Coordinator should be contacted for repair coordination.
- The ARHEC system priority is to provide communications via governing EOC (County, Districts or State ARPSC) to obtain medical support that is critical to patient health and facility welfare.
- When an ARHEC station operator is requested to provide communications to somewhere other than EOC (Net Control), the operator must request permission from Medical Control at the EOC to go direct, Hospital to Hospital (or site to site). The requesting station may be asked by the State, County, or Municipality NCO, EOC, county Emergency Manager, county Health Dept., as to the brief nature of the requested communications. The staff at the EOC must clear all direct communications so as to be aware of resources and decision affecting the overall event.

Procedures (cont.)

- When permission is granted, the station operator will contact the second hospital (or site) and request that they move to a simplex frequency (or another repeater).
- The frequency move is communicated to the EOC, and then both ARHEC stations move to the simplex frequency (or another repeater if necessary). The secondary operator at the EOC will monitor this message.
- When the direct communications is concluded, then both hospital ARHEC stations will return to the main frequency and re-check in after listening for on-going communications and at an appropriate time in the net.
- The following Annex's describe using proper Break Tags, Phonetic Alphabet and District 2 North ARHEC System.
 - See Annex A-2 for Break Tags / Word Descriptions.
 - See Annex A-3 for Phonetic Alphabet Descriptions.
 - See Annex A-4 for Oakland County ARHEC System.
 - See Annex A-5 for Macomb County ARHEC System.
 - See Annex A-6 for St. Clair County ARHEC System.

District 2 North Point of Contact and Authors

ARPSC – ARHEC Director, Radio Operator, ARES & RACES Volunteer

Bill Bond, W8WRB 586-808-0405
 Email w8wrb@arri.net

ARPSC – ARHEC Assistant Director, Radio Operator, ARES & RACES Volunteer

Mark Schurig, KC8WPS 248-217-8875
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ARPSC – ARHEC Policy Consultant, Radio Operator, ARES & RACES Volunteer

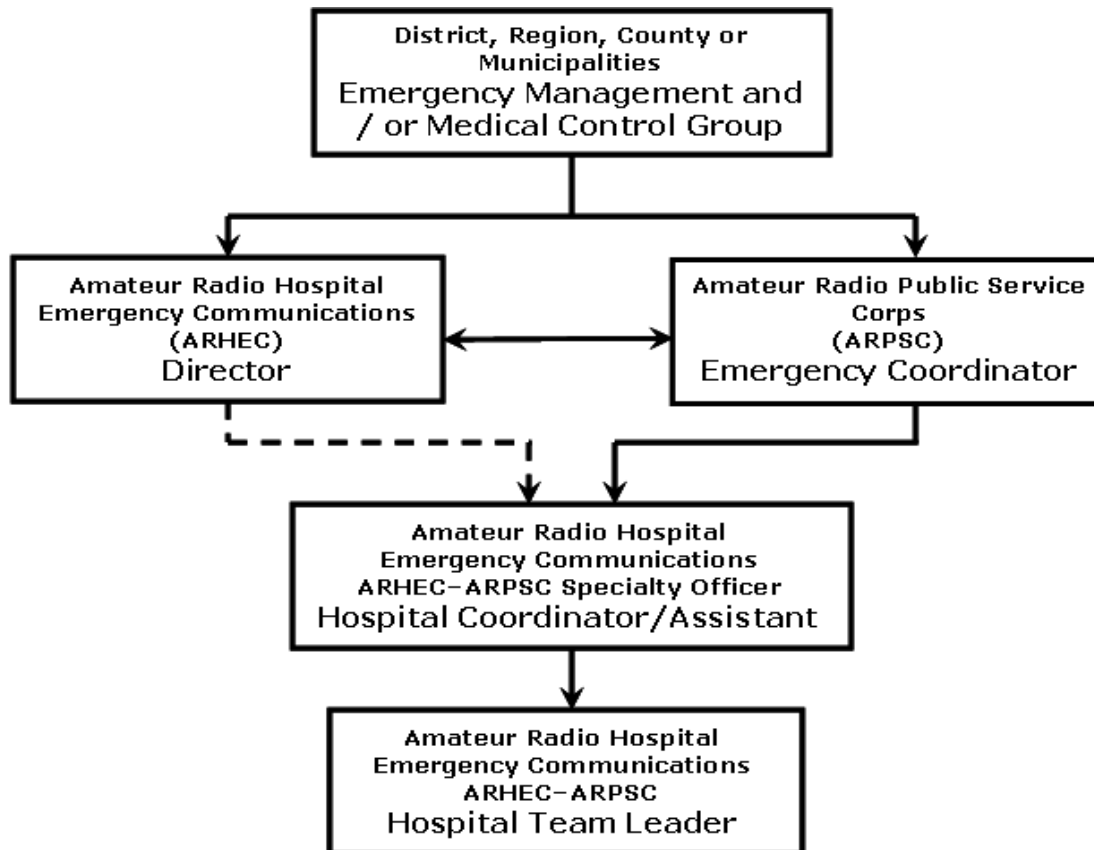
Dave Edenfield, W8RIT 810.765.3745
 Email w8rit@arri.net

ARHEC Process & Procedure

Annex A-1.0
Revised 9/03/07

ARHEC - ARPSC Organizational Structure

The ARHEC System is coordinated throughout a structure of State Districts, Regions, County, or Municipalities.



ARHEC Process & Procedure**Annex A-2.0
Revised 9/03/07****Break Tags / Word Descriptions:**

ARHEC stations during a directed net are required to use the following Word / Tags (sometimes referred to as Break Tags or Proword). Instead of saying 'break' in between transmissions during a directed net use the following Word / Tag with your Call Sign, Net Control will acknowledge your transmission and you will be called upon when appropriate.

They are:

- Answer, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Emergency, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Info, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Medical, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Priority, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Question, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Query, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Relay, (Plus Your Call Sign)
- Your Call Sign

These Word / Tag are to be used only when your traffic will be appreciated and results in more efficient communications. They are to be used wisely, the message that follows a break should be as short as possible.

Here are their intended uses:

Answer: To be used when you have the answer to a question currently being discussed on the radio.

Emergency: Only to be used to report an ongoing life threatening or property damaging incident.

Info: To be used when information needs to be transmitted rapidly but is not related to what is being said on the air. For instance, if something that net control needs to know about is going to happen in the next few seconds or if you wait for the end of an exchange, it will negate the value of the information.

Medical: Used when medical incident requires attention of the ARHEC Station operator. Operator will describe incident and status when and after Net Control acknowledges transmission.

Priority: To be used to report an important but non-life threatening situation such as an accident that just happened.

Question: To be used when making a **non-emergency, non-urgent** inquiry about a situation concerning the Net. For instance, when the event official is standing next to you and requested you to get some info using your radio. The Net Control Operator (NCO) will acknowledge and decide when to receive and answer the question. NCO will answer or have someone answer it. If the word **Question** is not used correctly: **non-emergency, non-urgent**, the NCO will **not acknowledge transmission** and **advise** the operator of this decision.

Query: Is to be used for **emergency, urgent** inquiry about the situation. Net control will acknowledge transmission instantly.

Relay: To be used when providing a communication link between a Net Control and another ARHEC station having transmission problems.

Your Call Sign: An indication that you have traffic that can wait and does not require the stoppage of the ongoing exchange. Using this tag, your expectations are you could be put on hold and in queue for your transmission.

Break Tags / Word Descriptions method takes very little training. Its use is contagious and comes very naturally. Required for all ARHEC communications.

ARHEC Process & Procedure**Annex A-3.0
Revised 9/03/07****Phonetic Alphabet**

- The ARHEC Stations are directed to use ITU phonetics to provide ACCURATE, EFFICIENT communications.
- International Telecommunications Union (ITU) phonetic alphabet is considered the worldwide standard for military, naval, civilian aeronautical and maritime, search and rescue groups, amateur radio & public safety, (law enforcement being an exception).

A	Alfa	AL FAH	N	November	NO VEM BER
B	Bravo	BRAH VOH	O	Oscar	OSS CAH
C	Charlie	CHAR LEE	P	Papa	PAH PAH
D	Delta	DELL TAH	Q	Quebec	KEH BECK
E	Echo	ECK OH	R	Romeo	Row ME OH
F	Foxtrot	FOKS TROT	S	Sierra	SEE AIR RAH
G	Golf	GOLF	T	Tango	TANG GO
H	Hotel	HOH TELL	U	Uniform	YOU NEE FORM
I	India	IN DEE AH	V	Victor	VIK TAH
J	Juliett	JEW LEE ETT	W	Whiskey	WISS KEY
K	Kilo	KEY LOH	X	X-Ray	ECKS RAY
L	Lima	LEE MAH	Y	Yankee	YANG KEY
M	Mike	MIKE	Z	Zulu	ZOO LOO

If non-standard phonetics is used, it may cause confusion, be misunderstood and possibly delay the communication.

ARHEC Process & Procedure

Annex A-4.0
Revised 9/03/07

Oakland County MI. ARHEC System

Net Schedule, Tactical Call Signs and Contact personnel

Hospital Coordinator, Jerry Begel – W9NPI, Cell Phone # 248.837.9478

Home Phone # 248.543.2284, E-Mail w9npi@arrl.net

Assist. Coordinator, Mark Schurig – KC8WPS, Cell Phone #248.217.8875

Home Phone # 248.288.1417, E-Mail kc8wps@arrl.net

Net Schedule

ARPSC-ARHEC serving Oakland County activates a net on the **Last Thursday** of every month at 7:30 pm. on frequency 146.9000 (100 PL).

Oakland County Medical Facilities Tactical Call Signs

- Beaumont, Royal Oak, Oakland
- Beaumont, Troy, Oakland
- Botsford, Farmington Hills, Oakland
- Crittenton, Rochester, Oakland
- Huron Valley Sinai, Commerce Township, Oakland
- DMC Surgery, Madison Heights, Oakland
- Henry Ford, West Bloomfield, Oakland
- Doctors Hospital of Michigan, Pontiac, Oakland
- Oakland Regional, Southfield, Oakland
- POH, Pontiac, Oakland
- POH, Clarkston, Oakland
- POH, Oxford, Oakland
- St. John Oakland, Madison Heights, Oakland
- St John Providence, Southfield, Oakland
- St. John Providence Park, Novi, Oakland
- St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, Pontiac, Oakland
- Genesys, Grand Blanc, Oakland

ARHEC Process & Procedure

Annex A-5.0
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Macomb County MI. ARHEC System

Net Schedule, Tactical Call Signs and Contact personnel

Hospital Coordinator, Stan Kowalski – N8UUI, Cell#: 248.703.6355
E-Mail stankowalski@comcast.net

Net Schedule

ARPSC-ARHEC serving Macomb County activates a net on the **3rd** (THRID) **Monday** of every month at 8:30 pm. on frequency 146.5800 Simplex.

Macomb County Medical Facilities Tactical Call Signs

- Henry Ford, Warren Campus, Macomb
- Henry Ford, Clinton Township, Macomb
- Henry Ford, Sterling Heights, Macomb
- Mount Clemens Regional, Macomb
- St. John Macomb Oakland, Macomb
- St. John Macomb Township, Macomb
- St. John North Shore, Macomb

ARHEC Process & Procedure

Annex A-5.0
Revised 9/03/07

St. Clair County MI. ARHEC System

Net Schedule, Tactical Call Signs and Contact personnel

Hospital Coordinator, Stan Arnett - AC8W, Phone # 810.364.6674
E-Mail ac8w@arrl.net

Net Schedule

ARPSC-ARHEC serving St. Clair County activates a net on 3rd Wednesday of each month. Immediately following the St Clair County ARPSC Net which is held on 147.300 @ 8:30 PM local time.

St. Clair County Medical Facilities Tactical Call Signs

- Mercy Port Huron, St. Clair
- Port Huron, St. Clair
- St. John River District, St. Clair