

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT PLAN

(VECS Plan)

**(Covering RACES, ARES, SkyWarn, REACT and
Other volunteer organizations and individuals)**

STATE OF WISCONSIN

JULY 2000

**This plan supercedes the RACES Communication Plan of the
State of Wisconsin dated September 1998.**

**It also serves as the first ARES Emergency Plan for the
Wisconsin Section, American Radio Relay League.**

DMA PAM 2036 (7/2000)

AIM

The aim of this Volunteer Emergency Communications Support (VECS) Plan is to supply authority and guidance for the participation of all unpaid volunteers in providing essential communications and communications support in the State of Wisconsin during periods of national, state or local emergency. The volunteers specified in this plan are a vital resource to Wisconsin because they hold:

1. Special knowledge and skills in the field of communications in operational, technical or administrative areas, and/or,
2. Special knowledge and skills in the field of severe weather response, storm spotting and a working knowledge of the National Weather Service Integrated Warning Concept, and/or,
3. An FCC license as an Amateur Radio operator. These volunteers are a special resource because they have access to a wide portion of the radio spectrum by reason of their licensed status, and because they are readily mobilized communicators with their own, decentralized pool of equipment.

This plan is an effort to provide for the services of all volunteers with expertise in one or more of the areas listed above. It is also designed to integrate insofar as is possible, the activities of RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, administered by Wisconsin Emergency Management) and ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service, a Field Service Division of the American Radio Relay League). The plan also extends to others with special knowledge and skills, such as SkyWarn (severe weather identification, evaluation and reporting), REACT (Citizen's Band and Land Mobile radio communications). All volunteers with the special skills listed above are welcome as participants in times of need.

This plan supercedes the RACES Communications Plan of the State of Wisconsin dated September 1998. It also serves as the first ARES Emergency Plan for the Wisconsin Section, ARRL.

The provisions of this enabling document are provided as guidance to local and county governments, and they may extend these provisions in their own emergency plans. ARES/RACES units are bound by the provisions of this document. Other private communications organizations in the State of Wisconsin are encouraged to reference and adopt this document to fit their needs, so as to foster the integration of volunteer emergency communication support in the state.

IMPORTANT NOTES ON SAFETY AND VOLUNTEER STATUS

Under no circumstances will any volunteer be asked to or expected to place their life, family or property in jeopardy. Volunteers are required to take those prudent steps necessary to protect their life, family and property. Volunteer status is only extended when requested by competent authority under the provisions of law, and only when duly registered in writing with the state, county or municipal agency that has requested the volunteer's services for that incident. Volunteer status implies the status of an unpaid employee, under Wisconsin statutes. See Appendix 11 for details.

RECORD OF CHANGES

[illegible]

Changes to this document will be published from time to time as needed, and will be automatically distributed to the same agencies and persons as the original document. Please make every effort to record and post the changes.

DISTRIBUTION

- Local and County Emergency Management Directors
- Local RACES Radio Officers and their Deputy Radio Officers
- Wisconsin RACES Net members
- State RACES Chief Radio Officer and State RACES Deputy Radio Officer
- Supporting State Agencies
- State EOCs
- State Regional EOC
- Emergency Management Directors of Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and the Canadian province Ontario.
- FEMA, Region V (Chicago)
- Wisconsin ARRL Section Manager and Section Emergency Coordinator
- Wisconsin ARRL Emergency Coordinators and District Emergency Coordinators
- Additional public and private agencies as determined by the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management
- Area SKYWARN groups
- Wisconsin Director, REACT

Note that this document, in PDF format, will be posted shortly after publication to the Wisconsin ARES/RACES web site at <http://www.execpc.com/~skaplan>, for examination or downloading by interested parties.

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INTRODUCTION

This Plan provides an emergency communications worker reserve for the State of Wisconsin. It provides state government with a variety of volunteer (unpaid) professional skills in administrative, technical and operational areas during times of emergency. In emergencies these skills are marshaled and focused on maintaining communications capabilities between Wisconsin State Government and:

1. Wisconsin State Agencies and Offices.
2. County governments.
3. Municipal and Town governments.
4. The governments of neighboring states.
5. Private agencies and institutions, as necessary in the public interest.

This plan includes the use of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators in RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) and ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service of the American Radio Relay League). As of January 2000, members of ARES are also registered RACES operators, and the reverse, as is explained in Appendix 9. Appendix 7 lists current FCC RACES rules.

This plan also acknowledges the expertise and resource status of other organizations whose membership is not restricted to licensed Amateur Radio operators (SKYWARN, REACT). Finally, this document also covers the use of volunteers who are not part of any special organization, but who can help in an emergency to augment regular communications services or warning systems by reason of their special skills in the operational, technical or administrative areas.

The Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management, has responsibility for organizing and administering the services of the volunteers covered by this Plan. This responsibility is delegated to a Communications and Warning Officer, who is directly assisted by two volunteers, a Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer and a Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer.

Resources of the VECS are normally mobilized at the same time that other public safety resources are responding and reacting to an incident. VECS resources should not be mobilized late, since this may reduce or eliminate their ability to act effectively.

AREA COVERED

The area covered in this plan is the State of Wisconsin including its 72 counties, with a population of over 5 million, a land area of 11,190 square miles and 65,500 square miles of water in over 14,000 lakes.

AUTHORITY

The following items provide the general authority for this Plan:

1. Public Law 81-920, Federal Emergency Management Act of 1950, as amended.
2. Public Law 93-288, Disaster Relief Act of 1974, as amended.
3. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules and Regulations, Part 97, Amateur Radio Services, Sub Part E (RACES), as amended (see Appendix 7).
4. Annex B (Communications), Wisconsin Emergency Operations Plan.
5. Field Services Organizational documents of the American Radio Relay League, and other ARRL documents including Memorandums of Understanding such as that with the National Weather Service.

JURISDICTIONS

The person ultimately responsible for the development of emergency services, civil defense and disaster response activities at the state government level is the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM), 2400 Wright Street, PO Box 7865, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7865. Development and implementation of this Plan is the responsibility of the WEM Communications and Warning Officer, aided by the Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer (CRO) and Deputy Radio Officer (DRO).

The Communications and Warning Officer is responsible for selecting and recommending for appointment the volunteer Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer (CRO), and, upon recommendation of the Chief Radio Officer, a volunteer Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer (DRO). These state level volunteer officers assist the Communications and Warning Officer in all Amateur Radio activities covered by this plan. The qualifications and specific duties of these officers are listed beginning on page 8 of this document.

Each local government Director of Emergency Management (DEM) shall appoint, subject to consultation with and approval by the Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer, a local Radio Officer (RO) and Alternate Radio Officer (ARO). These officers assist the DEM in all volunteer communications operations in the jurisdiction. Details of the qualifications and duties of these officers are also listed beginning on page 8.

Each local government Emergency Management Director shall also be responsible for creating a local VECS Plan, similar in scope to this plan but covering the jurisdiction of the local county or other governmental unit. The local plan is to be included in the local Emergency Operations Plan, Annex B, Communications and Warning. The local Radio Officer and Alternate Radio Officer should assist in the preparation of those portions of the document, which deal with volunteer communications support. A suggested format for the local plan can be found in Appendix 5. When completed, a copy of the plan must be submitted to the state Communications and Warning Officer for approval by that officer and the Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer. When approved, a signed Notification of Approval will be returned to the Emergency Manager for file at the local level.

The person responsible for all American Radio Relay League (ARRL) activities throughout the State of Wisconsin is the ARRL Section Manager (SM). In concert with provisions of the ARRL Field Services Organization, the SM will appoint a Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC), who has direct responsibility for all Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) activities in the state (see page 12 for a detailed SEC job description). In Wisconsin, the SEC is the appointing authority for Emergency Coordinators (ECs) in each county and additional special ECs as necessary. Other volunteer communications and warning services such as SKYWARN and REACT are responsible for their own appointments and activities. SKYWARN operations are normally within the County Warning Area of the local National Weather Service office (see Appendix 3 for a map of these, and Appendix 9 for a discussion of SKYWARN), while REACT teams operate within their designated city or county boundaries.

MISSION AND GENERAL PREPAREDNESS

The general mission for volunteers covered under this Plan is to augment or replace normal communications and warning operations, during times of emergency when normal communications channels are overloaded or no longer exist. This mission is aimed toward life safety, alleviation of human suffering and need, and the preservation of property, which may be threatened as described later in this Plan. Implicit in this mission is the need for training, so that the volunteer operators become proficient in the rapid, efficient passing of message or warning traffic using voice, data and other modes. It should be noted that volunteer operators covered under this Plan might be asked to pass traffic in emergencies to or from persons other than Amateur Radio, SKYWARN or REACT operators. Examples include police, fire, emergency

medical personnel, military radio operators and the Coast Guard, whose operators may not follow conventions used by volunteers. Accordingly, the training of volunteers covered in this Plan should also include conventions used by first responders and other public and military operators. The ultimate aim of this training is to avoid confusion during communications and to facilitate the passing of critical messages during emergencies.

The following assumptions are explicitly stated to support this mission.

1. The provisions of this Plan serve to support Annex B (Communications) of the Wisconsin Emergency Operations Plan.
2. The primary mission of volunteers is to provide essential backup communications services or communications support between the Wisconsin State Emergency Operations Center (EOC, located at 2400 Wright Street, Room 102, Madison), Wisconsin State Regional EOCs, local government EOCs, and neighboring state EOCs. Another aspect of the primary mission is to provide warnings of impending threats, listed below. The aim is to preserve life safety, alleviation of human suffering and need and the preservation of property. Volunteers covered by this plan may also provide emergency communications support or warning services to private organizations and institutions (for example, hospitals, nursing homes) when those communications are essential to the aims listed above or to other conditions which endanger the public good. Competent authority must always authorize communications support to both public and private organizations.
3. Volunteer communications links between the State EOC, State Area EOCs, local government EOCs and neighboring state EOCs will be maintained and periodically tested to insure they are operational and ready for use during an emergency.
4. A properly licensed Radio Amateur Control Operator (as defined by the FCC) will oversee the operation of each participating Amateur Radio station. This operator will be, whenever possible, the Radio Officer or Alternate Radio Officer in the case of local or county controlled stations or the Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer or Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer, in the case of state government controlled stations. This Control Operator will ensure compliance with FCC rules and will determine that all station equipment meets FCC standards before being placed on the air.
5. Training programs will be instituted at all levels so as to insure that volunteer operators know their job, in keeping with this document and any local VECS Plan.

THREATS

Wisconsin faces a variety of threats, both natural and technological, for which we must be prepared to respond. A wide range of hazards could require the services of volunteer personnel to augment, supplement or even replace existing governmental communications facilities. Such hazards include but are not limited to:

1. Hazardous chemical spills and releases, which can expose the population to both acute and chronic health risks.
2. Large scale transportation accidents, which can involve automobiles, buses, and trains, military or civilian aircraft and other modes.
3. Dam failures or other release of large volumes of water with attendant sudden surges of water and debris, stemming from natural or manmade causes.
4. Severe storms, tornadoes, flash floods and landslides, and even slow rising but devastating floods along river basins. Heavy ice or snowstorms can exacerbate these or other hazards, or they can be hazardous themselves.

5. Fires, which can threaten wooded areas and adjacent communities.
6. Earthquakes. Even those with epicenters in neighboring states can pose a hazard to the population of Wisconsin.
7. Nuclear accidents or incidents, either in the state or outside, may pose a threat to our population. Fixed nuclear power plant accidents, military installation incidents, civilian or military aircraft crashes or terrorist activity are all potential sources of this hazard.
8. Terrorism, civil unrest or mass actions are all possible sources of danger.
9. War, either nuclear or conventional, is a threat. There are many military bases and key industrial or economic centers in Wisconsin, which could be targeted for attack.

QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF RADIO OFFICERS

GENERAL. Frequencies that are used in emergency communications under federal rules for RACES operation require an Amateur Radio General Class license or higher. Accordingly, appointed Radio Officers and their deputies at all levels must hold a valid FCC license of at least General Class. In addition, Radio Officers and their deputies at all levels must be United States citizens, 18 years of age or older. No license class, age or citizenship requirements exist for other members of RACES or ARES groups, except that all must hold a valid FCC – issued Amateur Radio Operator license. ARES Emergency Coordinators are required by the ARRL to hold membership in the ARRL, but membership is not required of their assistants or other members of their ARES units.

No fee schedule, dues or other money charges will be set as a condition for membership in any Wisconsin ARES or RACES unit. This provision does not preclude occasional voluntary contributions to offset unit expenses, when duly approved by the membership of the unit.

TERMINOLOGY. Duly appointed radio officers at all levels will hold a title, which clearly identifies their position and unit of government. At the local level, appointees are known as Radio Officer (RO) or Alternate Radio Officer (ARO). Examples: Adams County Radio Officer, Wood County Alternate Radio Officer, and Cedarburg Radio Officer. The two state level officers shall be known as the Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer (CRO) and Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer (DRO).

Parallel titles are used for ARRL appointments. At the local level are Emergency Coordinator (EC) and Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC). Examples of titles: Ozaukee County Emergency Coordinator, Dane County Assistant Emergency Coordinator. ARRL appointments at the state level are Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) and Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator (ASEC). The ARRL also uses Districts; a District Emergency Coordinator (DEC) heads each. These Districts are shown in Appendix 2.

APPOINTING AUTHORITY: The appointing authority for the position of Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer is the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management, upon recommendation of the state Communications and Warning Officer. The appointing authority for the Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer is the same, except that the CRO must also approve a candidate for this position before the appointment is made.

Local Radio Officers and Alternate Radio Officers are appointed by the Emergency Manager of the local governmental body in which they serve. In addition, the local Radio Officer must approve a candidate for the position of Alternate Radio Officer before that appointment is made.

GUIDELINE FOR LOCAL APPOINTMENTS. The following guideline is suggested for local appointments within ARES and RACES. The aim of this guideline is to integrate, insofar as is possible, the emergency communications response of volunteer ARES/RACES personnel in the most efficient and seamless way.

A local ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) should be appointed to the position of local Radio Officer (RO), and the local ARES Emergency Coordinator (EC) should be appointed to the position of local Alternate Radio Officer (ARO). The rationale for this arrangement is as follows. ARES is often activated first during an emergency incident, and this requires the EC to be heavily involved in managing communications within the framework of ARES. If RACES is later activated, under the suggested arrangement the EC is kept free to continue managing ARES activities, while an AEC can pick up any new operations or administration associated with the RACES activation. The suggested arrangement has an added benefit. Since the EC and AEC work together with their ARES group constantly during non-emergency periods, the transition to working together during emergencies with both ARES and RACES activities should be smooth.

GUIDELINE FOR STATE LEVEL APPOINTMENTS. The ARRL ARES Section Emergency Coordinator (SEC) is the premier candidate for the position of Wisconsin RACES Chief Radio Officer (CRO), and should be appointed to this position if possible. If the SEC chooses not to accept this appointment, or cannot be selected because of license class or other considerations, the CRO should be selected first from among the pool of ARES District Emergency Coordinators, then county-level Emergency Coordinators. The Wisconsin RACES Deputy Radio Officer should ordinarily be appointed from among the pool of ARRL ARES District Emergency Coordinators or Emergency Coordinators.

DUTIES OF RADIO OFFICERS

LOCAL RADIO OFFICERS (RO). The duties of Radio Officers (municipal, county) are to:

1. Exercise direct control of all RACES operations and activities in their jurisdictions, including planning, training and actual emergency events.
2. Coordinate with ARES units, SKYWARN units, and other volunteer communications organizations and individuals during planning, training and actual emergencies.
3. Establish operational procedures necessary to carry out the provisions of their local VECS plan with regard to RACES provisions, with emphasis on the integration of RACES and ARES activities.
4. Establish and foster RACES backup radio communications between the State EOC, State Regional EOCs, local government EOCs and between local EOCs and local Emergency Management departments.
5. Ensure proper selection and use of frequencies for statewide and local emergency nets, to include those frequencies allocated for use by RACES.
6. Prescribe operational facilities and to provide for liaison and coordination necessary for the accurate, efficient and rapid handling of emergency related messages.
7. Activate nets organized under the provisions for RACES for training or actual emergencies
8. Prescribe the qualifications for VECS membership within the boundaries set out in this plan.

LOCAL ALTERNATE RADIO OFFICERS (ARO). In general, an ARO has the same mission and duties as the local RO. The ARO is expected to assist and constantly work together with the RO toward the accomplishment of these duties during planning, training and actual emergencies.

If the local Radio Officer is absent or disabled in office, the Alternate Radio Officer may carry out any duty in the name of the RO. The ARO must make every effort to consult with the RO, using all possible methods of communications, before assuming any duty of the RO.

THE WISCONSIN STATE RACES CHIEF RADIO OFFICER (CRO). The CRO will carry out all duties listed for local Radio Officers, and will also:

1. Oversee and be directly responsible for all RACES activities in Wisconsin, to include membership, planning, training and actual emergency events.
2. Direct the organization of state and area emergency communications nets, including training nets.
3. Establish alliances with such local governments, neighboring state governments and private organizations as desired by the participants, toward increasing readiness and efficiency among the volunteer communications personnel during actual incidents or training exercises.
4. Resolve any RACES frequency sharing problems within the state or between Wisconsin and neighboring states.
5. Take part in the approval process for local VECS plans, as outlined previously.

THE WISCONSIN STATE RACES DEPUTY RADIO OFFICER (DRO). The DRO will assist the CRO in all aspects of the duties assigned. In addition, the DRO is empowered to carry out any duty in the name of the CRO, should the CRO be absent or disabled in office. The DRO must make every effort to consult with the CRO, using all possible methods of communications, before assuming any duty of the CRO.

DUTIES OF ARRL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS

The following three job descriptions (EC, DEC and SEC) are taken from American Radio Relay League field service documents.

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR (EC). The ARRL Emergency Coordinator is a key team player in ARES on the local emergency scene. Working with the Section Emergency Coordinator, the District Emergency Coordinator and Official Emergency Stations, the EC prepares for, and engages in management of communications needs in disasters. EC duties include:

1. Promote and enhance the activities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for the benefit of the public as a voluntary, noncommercial communications service.
2. Manage and coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of interested amateurs working in support of the communities, agencies or functions designated by the Section Emergency Coordinator/Section Manager.
3. Establish viable working relationships with federal, state, county, city governmental and private agencies in the ARES jurisdictional area, which need the services of ARES in emergencies. Determine what agencies are active in your area, evaluate each of their needs, and which ones you are capable of meeting, and then prioritize these agencies and need. Discuss your planning with your Section Emergency Coordinator and then with your counterparts in each of the agencies. Ensure they are all aware of your ARES group's capabilities, and perhaps more importantly, your limitations.
4. Develop detailed local operational plans with "served" agency officials in your jurisdiction that set forth precisely what each of your expectations are during a disaster operation. Work jointly to establish protocols for mutual trust and respect. All matters involving recruitment and utilization of ARES volunteers are directed by you, in response to the needs assessed by the agency officials. Technical issues involving message format, security of message transmission, Disaster Welfare Inquiry policies, and others, should be reviewed and expounded upon in your detailed local operations plans.
5. Establish local communications networks run on a regular basis and periodically test those networks by conducting realistic drills
6. Establish an emergency traffic plan, with Welfare traffic inclusive, utilizing the National Traffic System as one active component for traffic handling. Establish an operational

liaison with local and section nets, particularly for handling Welfare traffic in an emergency situation.

7. In times of disaster, evaluate the communications needs of the jurisdiction and respond quickly to those needs. The EC will assume authority and responsibility for emergency response and performance by ARES personnel under his jurisdiction.
8. Work with other non-ARES amateur provider-groups to establish mutual respect and understanding, and a coordination mechanism for the good of the public and Amateur Radio. The goal is to foster an efficient and effective Amateur Radio response overall.
9. Work for growth in your ARES program, making it a stronger, more valuable resource and hence able to meet more of the agencies' local needs. There are thousands of new Technicians coming into the amateur service that would make ideal additions to your ARES roster. A stronger ARES means a better ability to serve your communities in times of need and a greater sense of pride for Amateur Radio by both amateurs and the public.
10. Report regularly to the SEC, as required.

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Technician or higher-class license. Full ARRL membership

DISTRICT EMERGENCY COORDINATOR (DEC). The ARRL District Emergency Coordinator is appointed by the Section Emergency Coordinator to supervise the efforts of local Emergency Coordinators in the defined district. The DEC's duties involve the following.

1. Coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of Emergency Coordinators in your district of jurisdiction.
2. Make local decisions in the absence of the Section Emergency Coordinator, or through coordination with the SEC, concerning the allotment of available amateurs and equipment during an emergency.
3. Coordinate the interrelationship between local emergency plans and between communications networks within your area of jurisdiction.
4. Act as backup for local areas without an Emergency Coordinator and assist in maintaining contact with governmental and other agencies within your area of jurisdiction.
5. Provide direction in the routing and handling of emergency communications of either a formal or tactical nature, with specific emphasis being placed on Welfare traffic.
6. Recommend EC appointments to the Section Emergency Coordinator.
7. Coordinate the reporting and documenting of ARES activities in your district of jurisdiction.
8. Act as a model emergency communicator as evidenced by dedication to purpose, reliability and understanding of emergency communications.
9. Be fully conversant in National Traffic System routing and procedures as well as have a thorough understanding of the locale and role of all vital governmental and volunteer agencies that could be involved in an emergency.

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Technician or higher class. Full ARRL membership.

SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR (SEC). The SEC is the assistant to the Section Manager (SM) for emergency preparedness. The SEC is appointed by the SM to take care of all matters pertaining to emergency communications and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) on a section-wide basis. The SEC post is one of top importance in the section and the individual appointed to it should devote all possible energy and effort to this one challenging organizational program for Amateur Radio. There is only one SEC appointed in each section of the ARRL Field Organization (*Wisconsin has only one section*). SEC qualifications and functions:

1. Encourage all groups of community amateurs to establish a local emergency organization.
2. Advise the SM on all section emergency policy and planning, including the development of a section emergency plan.
3. Cooperate and coordinate with the Section Traffic Manager so that emergency nets and traffic nets in the section present a united public service front, particularly in the proper routing of Welfare traffic in emergency situations. Cooperation and coordination should also be maintained with other section leadership officials as appropriate, particularly with the State Government Liaison and Public Information Coordinator.
4. Recommend appointments (and cancellations) to the Section Manager for the Emergency Coordinator and District Emergency Coordinator positions, and determine areas of jurisdiction of each amateur so appointed. At the SM's discretion, the SEC may be directly in charge of making and canceling such appointments. In the same way, the SEC can handle the Official Emergency Station appointments. (*Note that, in Wisconsin, the Section Manager has delegated authority for these appointments and cancellations to the SEC*).
5. Promote ARES membership drives, meetings, activities, tests, procedures, etc., at the section level.
6. Collect and consolidate Emergency Coordinator (or District Emergency Coordinator) monthly reports and submit monthly progress summaries to the SM and ARRL Headquarters. This includes timely reporting of emergency and public safety communications rendered in the section for inclusion in QST.
7. Maintain contact with other communications services and serve as liaison at the section level with all agencies served in the public interest, particularly in connection with state and local government, civil preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross, Salvation Army, the National Weather Service, and so on. Such contact is maintained in cooperation with the State Government Liaison.

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Full ARRL membership. Technician class license or higher.

ACTIVATION AND CONTROL

LEVEL	ACTIVATION AUTHORITY
LOCAL (city, county)	
ARES	ARRL Emergency Coordinator
RACES	City or County Emergency Manager
REGIONAL / DISTRICT	
ARES	ARRL District Emergency Coordinators
RACES	WEM Regional Directors
STATE	
ARES	ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator
RACES	State Communications and Warning Officer

The table above summarizes the types of activation (local, regional or statewide) and the expected activating authority in each case.

It should be noted that in some circumstances, the activating authority might be a person other than that shown above, as is often outlined in the duties of various individuals elsewhere in this Plan. For example, an ARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator may activate an ARES unit in the absence of the Emergency Coordinator. The WEM Administrator or his designated representative (WEM Duty Officer) may activate RACES statewide, as may the Governor of the State of Wisconsin. The Chief Radio Officer may activate RACES at the state level in the absence of the State Communications and Warning Officer, as may the state Deputy Radio Officer, in the absence of the CRO. Basically, any individual higher in the chain of command than that shown in the table above may activate their respective ARES or RACES unit. Subordinates to positions shown in the table may also activate their respective units, in the absence or inability of higher authority.

ARES ACTIVATION. Based upon past experience, it is expected that ARES will be activated first during development of a local emergency. This may even be the case in a regional or statewide emergency. As described more fully beginning on page 11 of this Plan, local ARES units operate under the direction of their Emergency Coordinator. District Emergency Coordinators gather regional resources and make them available to the activated local ARES unit as necessary to facilitate support. District Emergency Coordinators also direct regional efforts when more than one ARES unit in their district is activated. The Section Emergency Coordinator directs activities when more than one district is activated, or as is necessary to support and coordinate the mobilized activity of any number of ARES units in the state.

RACES ACTIVATION. When RACES is activated at any level, RACES rules, including any FCC-declared RACES-specific rules or guidelines, take absolute precedence. All ARES activities not also supported by the RACES mission as defined by this Plan or competent authority are suspended. All ARES/RACES Amateur Radio Operators cease work under the direction of ARRL-sponsored officials (EC, DEC, SEC) and come under the direction of the local and/or state level Radio Officer. Current FCC Rules governing RACES activities are reprinted in Appendix 7.

It should be emphasized that the rules concerning activation and control outlined here refer to the *administration* of volunteer Amateur Radio operators during emergencies. In Wisconsin, ARES operators are also RACES operators, and vice versa (see Appendix 9 for a detailed description of ARES/RACES relationships in Wisconsin). Thus, ARES/RACES describes a single pool of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators. It is therefore expected that, when RACES is activated after an earlier ARES activation, the same group of operators will be working, albeit under somewhat different rules and with a somewhat different mission.

SKYWARN AND REACT ACTIVATION. SKYWARN may be activated at the request of the National Weather Service Lead Forecaster/Meteorologist or when local area SKYWARN severe weather criteria are met. NWS County Warning Areas are shown on the map in Appendix 3. REACT may activate when severe weather criteria are met, or to aid in coping with any of the threats noted previously in this Plan. See Appendix 9 for a discussion of SKYWARN.

ADMINISTRATION

REVISIONS TO THIS PLAN. As outlined elsewhere in this Plan, Wisconsin Emergency Management administers the VECS program. Because of the purposeful integration of the volunteers in this program, changes to this Plan will be made only after conferral with leadership officials from all organizations effected by the changes, so that a reasonable approximation of consensus can be achieved. However, the final authority for guidelines, rules and regulations, including but not restricted to those set forth in this Plan, rests with the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management.

ARES AND RACES REGISTRATION. ARES members in Wisconsin are simultaneously RACES members, and may be referred to as ARES/RACES members (see Appendix 9 for details of this relationship). To be a member of ARES/RACES, an FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operator must fulfill the following requirements.

1. The operator must join an ARES unit.
 - a. The Amateur Radio operator can initiate a request for membership in their local ARES unit by contacting their local ARRL Emergency Coordinator (EC).
 - b. ARES units exist only where an EC has been appointed to direct and administer the unit. If no EC has been appointed in a particular political subdivision such as a county, an operator may request membership in a neighboring county ARES unit.
 - c. Some special ECs (and their ARES units) exist without a usual affiliation with a discrete political subdivision. For example, a special EC and ARES unit exists for Packet Radio, and another exists for the National Weather Service. An Amateur Radio operator who joins one of these special groups because of expertise or interest has fully satisfied the requirement for membership in an ARES unit, because these special units hold the same status as any other ARES unit in the state.
2. The operator must become registered as a RACES operator with Wisconsin Emergency Management.
 - a. Within 10 calendar days of the date an Amateur Radio operator joins a regular or special ARES unit, the EC of that unit must register that individual as a RACES operator with Wisconsin Emergency Management. To accomplish this, the EC must send certain data items to the Chief Radio Officer by US Mail, email or other means. The required data items are:
 - (1) Amateur Callsign and class of license.
 - (2) Last name, first name, home address, city, state and ZIP code.
 - (3) Home area code and phone number (if permitted and provided by the volunteer).
 - b. The CRO will add this data to the official ARES/RACES database, thus completing the necessary registration with Wisconsin Emergency Management. The effective date of registration will be the date that the data was received by the CRO.

*It should be carefully noted that registering with WEM as an ARES/RACES operator **does not** preclude the necessity of registering as a volunteer with the county or municipal agency that requests your services during an emergency. You **MUST register in writing** at the local level, if you are to work as a volunteer at the local level. See Appendix 11 for details.*

IDENTIFICATION BADGES AND SECURITY. Wisconsin Emergency Management will issue ID badges to ARES/RACES members and other volunteers who will work in the State Hamshack, State EOC, Alternate State EOCs, or other areas of a sensitive or secure nature. These ID badges have an expiration date that is designed to terminate at the end of the current emergency. Counties and other political or special subdivisions are encouraged to develop and issue their own ID badges when the need for this security measure is felt at the local level. When issued, all volunteer ID badges should exhibit, at a minimum:

1. Name and Amateur Radio Callsign (if any).
2. Color or black-and-white photograph.
3. Signature and title of competent authority for issuing the card (EM, RO, etc.).
4. Name of agency or political subdivision the volunteer is serving.

The ID badge should be laminated to avoid alterations or damage. Persons needing help with designing an adequate, inexpensive ID badge may contact the RACES Chief Radio Officer.

In keeping with guidelines set forth by FEMA for RACES units, a limited background check for ARES/RACES applicants is recommended to the extent that similar requirements exist for other

members of the emergency staff with access to restricted areas. No background check is recommended for those ARES/RACES applicants that will not have access to restricted areas.

OPERATIONS

1. All Amateur Radio operations will be consistent with current FCC rules.
2. The frequencies and types of emission used will be as authorized by the FCC for the Amateur Radio Service, unless restricted or expanded by the FCC, as may be in effect when RACES is activated. See also Appendices 7 and 8 for further information.
3. Call signs will be the FCC-issued call sign of the operator controlling that station, with one exception. That exception is the Wisconsin State Hamshack located at Wisconsin Emergency Management in Madison, which will use the call sign WC9AAG so long as this RACES call is assigned. Tactical call signs will be freely used, when appropriate, as outlined in the section covering tactical call signs in Appendix 8 of this Plan.
4. Nets organized during training sessions or actual emergencies are geographically unrestricted. They may include a single county, multiple counties, the entire state, or even a multi-state area, as is deemed appropriate for mission or training purposes. Mutual aid between counties and between states is encouraged and expected.

LOGISTICS

MAINTENANCE. ARES/RACES equipment and facilities located in the State Hamshack, State EOC and Alternate EOCs will be maintained as directed by the Administrator, WEM. Similarly, equipment located in Regional EOCs and local EOCs and radio rooms will be maintained as directed by competent regional or local authority. Additionally, the FCC requires that the Amateur Radio Control Operator for any station be responsible for insuring that equipment meets FCC standards before transmitting signals, and this requirement must be strictly adhered to.

SUPPLIES. Insofar as is practical, a 30-day supply of operational materials and parts will be maintained in the State EOC for Amateur Radio equipment located in the State Hamshack. The State EOC will also maintain an adequate inventory of test equipment and tools needed for maintenance of this equipment. Local EOCs are encouraged to follow a similar schedule.

ACCOUNTABILITY. Security and accountability for all communications equipment and supplies located in the State EOC is the responsibility of the State Warning and Communications Officer. Equipment and supplies located in State Regional and local government EOCs are the responsibility of the Area Director and local Emergency Manager, respectively.

CONTROL AND LINE OF SUCCESSION. Control will be exercised from the Wisconsin State Emergency Operations Center through the Wisconsin State Hamshack, both located at 2400 Wright Street, Madison. See Appendix 4 for a detailed Hamshack Activation Plan. The line of succession shall be:

1. Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management.
2. State Warning and Communications Officer.
3. State RACES Chief Radio Officer.
4. State RACES Deputy Radio Officer.

Direction will be in accordance with the Direction and Control Annex of the Wisconsin Emergency Operations Plan. Communications will be in accordance with Communications Annex B of the Wisconsin Emergency Operations Plan and this Plan.

SIGNATURES

 13 June 2000
Alan Wohlferd (date)
Communications and Warning Officer

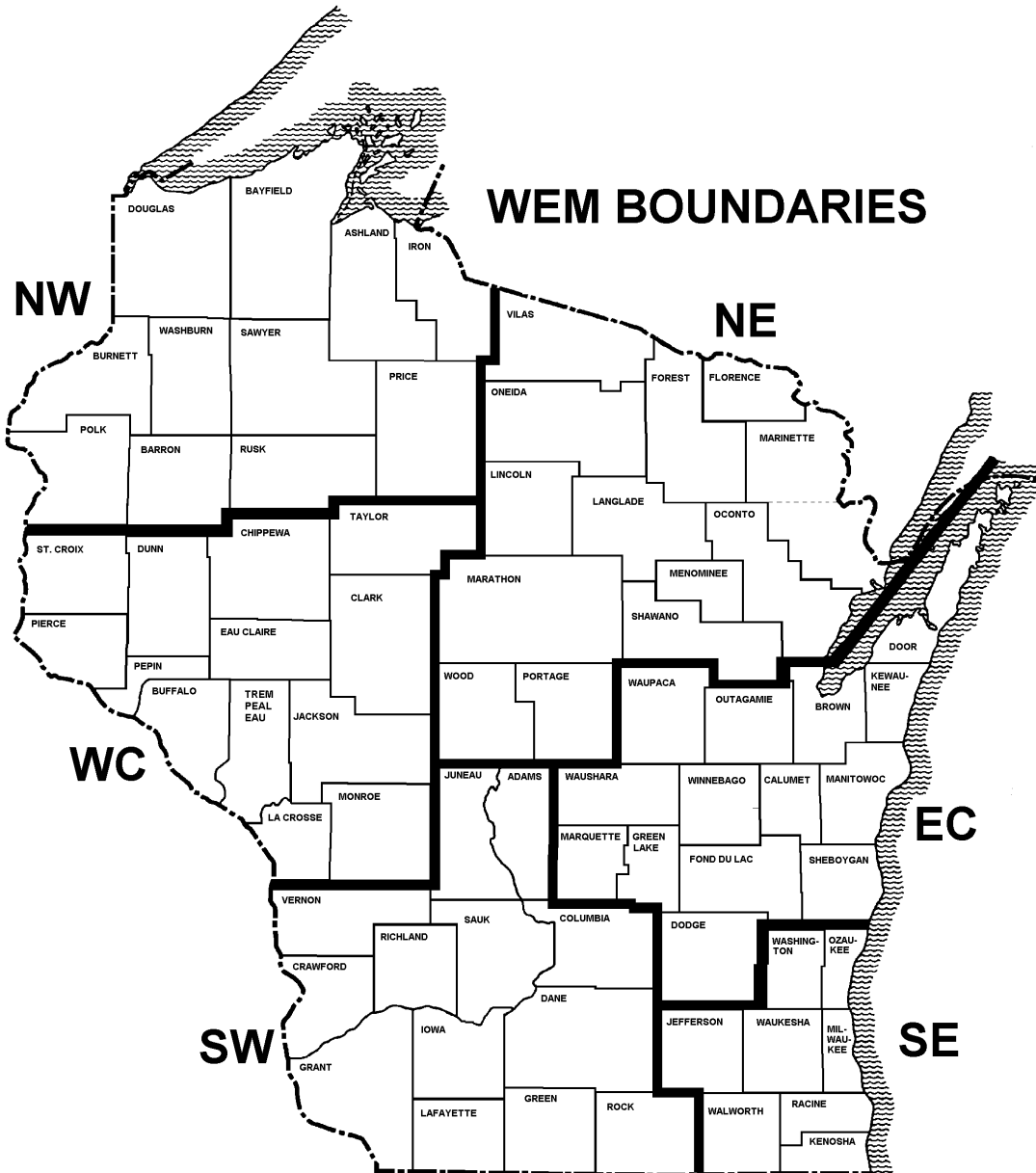
 4 JUN 2000
Stanley Kaplan (date)
RACES Chief Radio Officer

{End of body of document. Appendices follow.}

APPENDIX 1 WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REGIONS

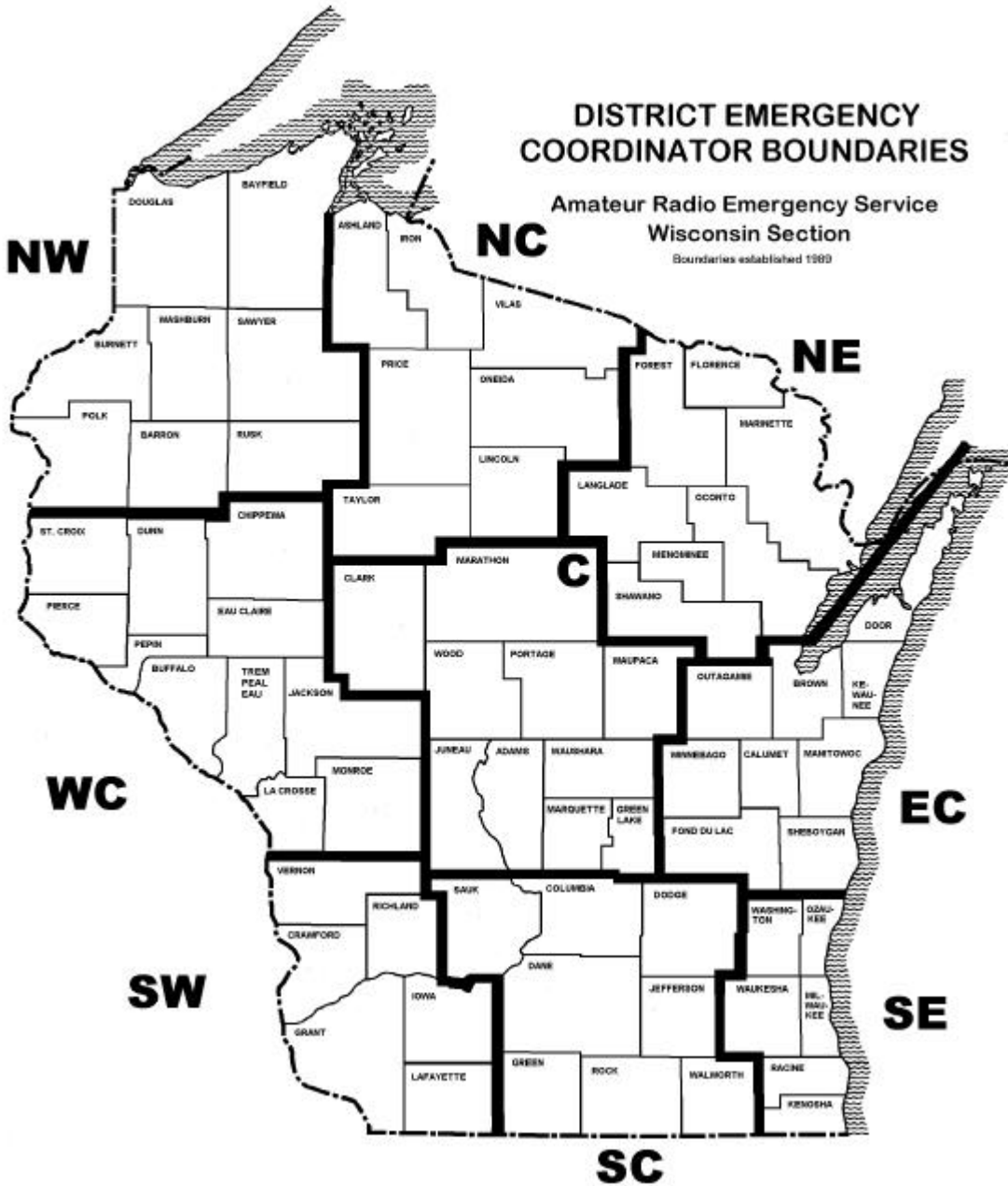
Wisconsin Emergency Management divides the state into 9 Regions, shown below. Compare with the 6 Districts designated by the American Radio Relay League ARES organization, shown in Appendix 2. The National Weather Service uses yet another partitioning scheme, shown in Appendix 3.

Abbreviations: NW = northwest; NE = northeast; WC = west central, EC = east central, SW = southwest; SE = southeast.



APPENDIX 2 ARRL DISTRICTS

The American Radio Relay League ARES scheme divides the state into 6 Districts, as shown below. One District Emergency Coordinator is assigned to each. Each individual county is assigned an Emergency Coordinator. Wisconsin Emergency Management divides the state into three more portions (Appendix 1) for a total of 9, and calls each a Region.



APPENDIX 3

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COUNTY WARNING AREAS

The NWS divides the state into 5 County Warning Areas. A Weather Service Office (WSO) or Weather Service Forecasting Office (WSFO), as shown below, services each of these. Abbreviations:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. WFO-DLH = Duluth | 4. WFO-ARX = La Crosse |
| 2. WFO-GRB = Green Bay | 5. WSFO-MKX = Milwaukee/Sullivan |
| 3. WSFO-MPX = Minneapolis | |



APPENDIX 4

WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

EOC RADIO ROOM (HAMSHACK) ACTIVATION PLAN

In the event of a national or state emergency, the following WEM EOC Radio Room (Hamshack) Activation Plan will be implemented, upon request of the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management or the WEM Duty Officer.

1. The hamshack callsign is WC9AAG.
2. ARES/RACES/MARS volunteers will staff the hamshack. HF radio operator support for the Wisconsin National Guard will be coordinated through the WEM Communications and Warning Officer.
3. Initially, HF frequency 7.277 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 1200Z through 2400Z.
4. Initially HF frequency 3.9935 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 2400Z through 1200Z.
5. PacTOR will be available, as needed, on HF frequency 3.584 MHz USB.
6. VHF full time packet (wc9aag@wc9aag.en53ja.wi.us.na) MSYS BBS is available on the ARES/RACES packet network frequency 145.610 MHz. The node is ARWEM.
7. VHF voice will be on the Madison Area Repeater Association 147.150 MHz (PL 123.0) repeater, linked (if needed) to the Milwaukee MAARS 145.130 MHz (PL 127.3) repeater.
8. UHF/6 meter voice will be on the Southern Wisconsin Repeater Group (443.400/443.675/53.090) and the UHF Backbone Network.
9. Emergency bulletins, frequency updates, situation reports and the like will be disseminated using the Badger Emergency Net (BEN) on 7.283 MHz LSB, if it is active.
10. Email will be utilized, when available. Hamshack email: races@dma.state.wi.us.
11. The hamshack telephone number is 1-608-242-3323 (with voice mail), if phones are operational.
12. HF voice frequencies will be adjusted for changing band conditions.
13. For additional ARES/RACES information, contact the State Chief RACES Radio Officer/Wisconsin ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator Dr. Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR, skaplan@mcw.edu or telephone number 1-262-284-9346
14. For general WEM EOC hamshack information, send an inquiry to the hamshack email address or call the hamshack telephone number. Check the WEM Internet web page URL at <http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/dma/wem/index.htm>.
15. Air Force MARS point of contact is Christopher J. Lehner, N9SBQ/AFA3VB/AFF3WI, clehner@execpc.com.
16. Army MARS point of contact is Gustov Bonow, AAR5BS/W9IHW, bsmarswi@wctc.net, telephone number: 1-715-887-3962.
17. Navy MARS point of contact is Robert Barker, NNN0GCE/WI, dchief@ticon.net.
18. WEM point of contact is Alan Wohlfert, Communications and Warning Officer, wohlf@dma.state.wi.us or telephone 1-608-242-3250.

Current as of 11 February 2000; edited and amended 2 June 2000.

APPENDIX 5

CHECKLIST FOR A LOCAL VECS PLAN

Each local Emergency Manager is required to create and file a local VECS Plan, similar in scope to the state Plan, but modified to fit the needs of the local governmental entity. The local Plan need not be as extensive as that of the state. However, there are elements that must be present in the local version. The checklist below lists the required elements.

1. Name and describe the area covered by the local VECS Plan.
2. If a county or other area-wide VECS plan, specifically name all communities or political subdivisions included.
3. Provide the name, address and official title of the person responsible for coordinating all emergency management activities in the area. Note that the plan and all future amendments must bear this official's signature of approval.
4. Name each Radio Officer (RO) and Alternate Radio Officer (ARO), including call signs.
 - a. Show the address, telephone number and official title of each.
 - b. In some cases, AROs may not be simply assistants to ROs, but may actually be assigned specific duties or areas of responsibility within the area covered by the plan. If ARO(s) are responsible for various geographical zones of operation or functional areas, identify these zones or areas.
5. List the nets in use. Describe the purpose of each net (i.e., command and control, first aid, radiological, etc.) and the area it serves. This is the place to document your routine training nets.
6. Describe how each net will be organized for command and operational purposes, i.e.:
 - a. from local to area, or local to state control
 - b. from local to lower echelons
 - c. coordination with police, fire, engineering, medical, rescue or other services
7. Show a list of the callsign to be used by each net control station and each alternate. If permanent assignments are not made, so state this in the heading to the list.
8. Provide a roster of each operator, including callsign, name, complete address and phone number. Indicate the net(s) in which they will operate. If permanent net assignments are not made, or if all operators participate in all nets, so state this in the heading to the roster.
9. Describe the method and authority used to coordinate frequency usage with similar nets in the same geographical and adjacent areas so as to provide efficient usage of the frequencies without interference. Your plan must specifically state that your local organization will resolve all frequency sharing problems within your area of operation, and will also resolve any frequency sharing problems with organizations in other areas, present or future.
10. If any changes occur in your organization that alters the information submitted in your original plan, the plan must be amended to show the changes. One copy of the amendments must also be sent to the Communications and Warning Officer, Wisconsin Emergency Management.

Once a local VECS Plan has been created, adopted and signed, one signed copy should be sent to the Communications and Warning Officer, Wisconsin Emergency Management. This will be examined at the state level and, if satisfactory, a Notice of Approval will be returned.

APPENDIX 6

LOCAL RECORD KEEPING AND LOGS

Local heads of ARES/RACES units (Emergency Coordinators, Radio Officers) must keep basic records for their units, in keeping with good administrative practice. Beyond that, because of the inherent nature of emergency activities (including emergency communications), there might be times when such records have importance in connection with law enforcement investigations or legal proceedings. Therefore, local units are required to establish and maintain the following records for their units. However, no information should be requested or kept that is protected under the Privacy Act.

1. A copy of the state-approved, local VECS Plan.
2. A record of all ARES/RACES activations, nets, drills, and training sessions.
3. A file of all equipment and instruction manuals. This file should include copies of manuals for privately owned equipment when the equipment is made available for common use.
4. A current membership roster, which includes:
 - a. Callsign
 - b. First and last name
 - c. Home address, city, state and ZIP code
 - d. Home area code and telephone number (if permitted and submitted by the member)
 - e. Class of Amateur Radio license

The most current state RACES roster, supplied by the RACES Chief Radio Officer each time information is added or updated for a local unit, will suffice for a current membership roster.

5. Individual member records:
 - a. Applications for membership.
 - b. Copy of Amateur Radio license.
 - c. Record of participation in activations, nets, drills, and training sessions.

Good operating and administrative practice is also the responsibility of the individual operator, and it is expected that heads of units will supply adequate training in this responsibility. All volunteers should be trained and to keep an accurate written log of their activities during drills or actual emergencies. In the case of radio operators, this should include at a minimum the date, time, source or recipient and gist of any message traffic passed. In the case of other volunteers, the log should include at minimum the date, time period and nature of the activity engaged in. Logs must be turned in to the EC, RO or other competent authority at the conclusion of an activation or training session. Logs must be created and expanded during the actual activity covered; reconstructed logs are not acceptable. Remember that logs are important documents. They may well become significant in legal proceedings or in law enforcement activities.

APPENDIX 7

FCC Rules - RACES

§97.407 Radio amateur civil emergency service.

(a) No station may transmit in RACES unless it is an FCC-licensed primary, club, or military recreation station and it is certified by a civil defense organization as registered with that organization, or it is an FCC-licensed RACES station. No person may be the control operator of a RACES station, or may be the control operator of an amateur station transmitting in RACES unless that person holds a FCC-issued amateur operator license and is certified by a civil defense organization as enrolled in that organization.

(b) The frequency bands and segments and emissions authorized to the control operator are available to stations transmitting communications in RACES on a shared basis with the amateur service. In the event of an emergency which necessitates the invoking of the President's War Emergency Powers under the provisions of Section 706 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §606, RACES stations and amateur stations participating in RACES may only transmit on the following frequencies:

(1) The 1800-1825 kHz, 1975-2000 kHz, 3.50-3.55 MHz, 3.93-3.98 MHz, 3.984-4.000 MHz, 7.079-7.125 MHz, 7.245-7.255 MHz, 10.10-10.15 MHz, 14.047-14.053 MHz, 14.22-14.23 MHz, 14.331-14.350 MHz, 21.047-21.053 MHz, 21.228-21.267 MHz, 28.55-28.75 MHz, 29.237-29.273 MHz, 29.45-29.65 MHz, 50.35-50.75 MHz, 52-54 MHz, 144.50-145.71 MHz, 146-148 MHz, 2390-2450 MHz segments;

(2) The 1.25 m, 70 cm, and 23 cm bands; and

(3) The channels at 3.997 and 53.30 MHz may be used in emergency areas when required to make initial contact with a military unit and for communications with military stations on matters requiring coordination.

(c) A RACES station may only communicate with:

(1) Another RACES station;

(2) An amateur station registered with a civil defense organization;

(3) A United States Government station authorized by the responsible agency to communicate with RACES stations;

(4) A station in a service regulated by the FCC whenever such communication is authorized by the FCC.

(d) An amateur station registered with a civil defense organization may only communicate with:

(1) A RACES station licensed to the civil defense organization with which the amateur station is registered;

(2) The following stations upon authorization of the responsible civil defense official for the organization with which the amateur station is registered:

(i) A RACES station licensed to another civil defense organization;

(ii) An amateur station registered with the same or another civil defense organization;

(iii) A United States Government station authorized by the responsible agency to communicate with RACES stations; and

(iv) A station in a service regulated by the FCC whenever such communication is authorized by the FCC.

(e) All communications transmitted in RACES must be specifically authorized by the civil defense organization for the area served. Only civil defense communications of the following types may be transmitted:

(1) Messages concerning impending or actual conditions jeopardizing the public safety, or affecting the national defense or security during periods of local, regional, or national civil emergencies;

(2) Messages directly concerning the immediate safety of life of individuals, the immediate protection of property, maintenance of law and order, alleviation of human suffering and need, and the combating of armed attack or sabotage;

(3) Messages directly concerning the accumulation and dissemination of public information or instructions to the civilian population essential to the activities of the civil defense organization or other authorized governmental or relief agencies; and

(4) Communications for RACES training drills and tests necessary to ensure the establishment and maintenance of orderly and efficient operation of the RACES as ordered by the responsible civil defense organization served. Such drills and tests may not exceed a total time of 1 hour per week. With the approval of the chief officer for emergency planning in the applicable State, Commonwealth, District, or territory, however, such tests and drills may be conducted for a period not to exceed 72 hours no more than twice in any calendar year.

APPENDIX 8: FREQUENCIES, TACTICAL CALL SIGNS

FREQUENCIES. The following table lists primary and alternate frequencies for communications with or among Wisconsin Emergency Management Amateur Radio Stations. See also the State EOC Hamshack Activation Plan, Appendix 4. Local ARES/RACES units should develop their own primary and alternate frequency schemes. All frequencies are listed in megahertz. Single frequencies indicate simplex use; frequency pairs indicate input/output for duplex (repeater) use.

BAND (USE)	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	NOTES
HF (SSB)	3.9935 LSB	3.985 LSB	During night hours (6 p to 6 a, local)
HF (SSB)	7.277 LSB	7.283 LSB	During daylight hours
HF (PacTOR)	3.584 USB	*	
VHF (duplex)	147.75/147.15	146.28/146.88	PL 123.0
VHF (packet)	145.61	145.03	
VHF (6 meter)	53.09	*	
UHF (duplex)	443.400/443.675	*	
UHF (simplex)	446.45	*	

*If no secondary frequency is listed above for a given band, voice communications will be established on the appropriate National FM Simplex Frequency listed below, then moved to a mutually agreed-upon non-calling frequency. Other nationally accepted calling frequencies (SSB-QRP) are also listed below, for the sake of completeness and for emergency use if primary and secondary frequencies fail. As always, listen first and do not transmit if a frequency is in use. All frequencies are shared!

BAND	FREQ
40 meter	7.285
20 meter	14.285
15 meter	21.385
10 meter	28.385
6 meter	52.525
2 meter	146.52
220 MHz	223.50
440 MHz	446.00
900 MHz	906.50
1.296 GHz	1296.10

TACTICAL CALL SIGNS. These can be defined as any unconventional call sign whose purpose is to shorten or clarify communications between stations. A county EOC station, for example, may be in operation for many hours, utilizing several shifts of hams, all with different calls. If individual calls were used exclusively, a shift/call change could be confusing to other stations communicating with the EOC.

Tactical calls may (and should) be freely used, with the caveat that FCC rules still prevail; you MUST identify with a conventional call sign:

1. Every 10 minutes.
2. At the end of a series of topic related transmissions, or when closing down.
3. At the end of an unanswered call.

Typical tactical calls might be "STATE EOC" or "RED CROSS SHELTER" or "OZAUKEE EOC" or "TWELFTH AND MAIN". An operator at the Wisconsin State Hamshack can satisfy FCC requirements by adding the hamshack callsign before or after the tactical call every 10 minutes, or when the hamshack closes down operations: "STATE EOC – WC9AAG". An operator at a temporary site can satisfy requirements by appending their callsign: "RED CROSS SHELTER – W9XYZ".

APPENDIX 9

ARES, RACES AND SKYWARN

RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) is an organization of volunteer Amateur Radio operators whose mission is to provide supplemental radio communications to state and local government during times of emergency. Founded under the sponsorship of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the 1950s, RACES original mission was to provide emergency communications for civil defense purposes. Since then, the mission has broadened to include all local, regional or national civil (but not military) emergencies, not just those which are war-related. It is strictly an Amateur Radio Service and, as such, the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) regulates it. In peacetime, it uses amateur frequencies, and RACES operators have the same privileges and restrictions that are afforded to any amateur of the same class of license.

The administration and operation of RACES has been delegated by FEMA to the states. WEM (Wisconsin Emergency Management) handles RACES in Wisconsin. Under the WEM Director is a Communications and Warning Officer (CWO) who is responsible for RACES. The CWO appoints a volunteer Wisconsin State RACES Chief Radio Officer (CRO) and RACES Deputy Radio Officer (DRO), as described elsewhere in this document.

In summary, RACES is a governmentally sponsored organization, provided for in statutes at both the state and federal levels. Its members, however, are private volunteers, and all are FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operators.

ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) is a field service organization of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), a private, non-profit organization for Amateur Radio operators. Started in the 1930s, the ARES mission is similar to that of RACES, but a notable difference is that ARES is designed to provide emergency communications support to any agency, public or private. ARES may provide such support to municipalities, to non-profit private agencies, or even to for-profit companies. For example, ARES might be called upon to provide emergency communications to a large corporation that needs to evacuate its workers because of a chemical spill. Like RACES, all members of ARES must be FCC licensed Amateur Radio Operators. Like RACES, all of its members are private volunteers. However, in contrast to RACES, ARES is part of a non-governmental, private organization.

ARES/RACES. ARES and RACES have been integrated in Wisconsin. Because RACES is sponsored by government while ARES is sponsored by a private (albeit not-for-profit) organization, the two cannot be merged at the administrative level. However, the working portion of each organization (i.e., the volunteer, FCC-licensed Radio Amateurs) can be. Full integration has been accomplished in Wisconsin (effective 1 January 2000) by requiring all ARES members to be registered RACES operators and vice versa. Thus, with respect to the volunteers who actually provide emergency communications, the two groups are now the same. An administrative aim is to keep this integration as seamless as is possible, consistent with mission and the provisions of law. Accordingly, the two organizations are referred to as ARES/RACES in most places in this document.

TRAINING. A vital part of the mission of ARES/RACES is self-organization and training, so that the volunteer communicators are prepared to serve when emergencies occur. Training should be designed so that operators become proficient in the rapid, efficient passing of messages or other traffic using voice, data and other modes. However, traffic handling in real emergencies will not be exclusively between Amateur Radio operators. Volunteer operators may be required to pass or receive messages from people who do not follow conventions used in Amateur Radio. Examples are first responders such as police, fire fighters and EMTs, and non-first responders such as local government officials. Accordingly, ARES/RACES training should include not only Amateur Radio practices, but should also include communications conventions used by first

responders and other public and even private facilities. For example, for ARES/RACES units in counties bordering Lake Michigan, training in marine communications and Coast Guard conventions is essential.

It is also important that ARES/RACES volunteers be provided training so that they fully understand the significance of membership in both organizations. For example, if an ARES volunteer is operating during an emergency and RACES is subsequently activated by competent authority, the ARES volunteer becomes a RACES operator and may not communicate with non-RACES Amateur Radio operators (see Appendix 7, FCC rules covering RACES). Furthermore, if RACES is activated by the President of the United States under the War Powers Act, all amateur radio stations will be silenced except for RACES stations, and RACES transmissions will be restricted to certain frequencies.

Clearly, it is important that the volunteer know of the rules, procedures and limitations that apply to operations under RACES. Accordingly, to be effective, training of Amateur Radio volunteers in Wisconsin must be designed to address emergency communications aspects of both RACES and ARES organizations.

SKYWARN. This nationwide program was developed by the National Weather Service in the late 1960s to promote the identification, evaluation and reporting of dangerous weather.

While ARES/RACES operators tend to focus on providing communications support in emergencies, SKYWARN operators tend to focus on severe weather events and tend to use radios simply as a means to report their observations. This difference in focus, based entirely on personal preference, is a good thing. In both cases, the public benefits from volunteers who specialize in their own interests and who provide a service that cannot be matched in any other way.

Today, trained SKYWARN spotters provide a critically important service by reporting real-time, ground-truth severe weather observations to local Emergency Managers and especially to the National Weather Service. Any organized assembly of spotters who perform these functions can be considered a SKYWARN unit.

While most SKYWARN operators are licensed Amateur Radio operators, this is not a requirement for membership and there are many non-ham operators that relay reports using Citizen's Band, General Mobile Radio Service and Business Band radios. Today, both the National Weather Service and private agencies conduct SKYWARN programs.

It is interesting to note that virtually every National Weather Service office in the United States contains a working Amateur Radio station capable of receiving reports from hams in the field. In Wisconsin, about 80% of all reports coming in to National Weather Service offices are from Amateur Radio operators – SKYWARN members, ARES/RACES members and non-affiliated hams.

APPENDIX 10

SAMPLE NET SCRIPT

The aim of non-emergency nets is to train the Net Control Operator, and those listening, in net procedures and the efficient handling of traffic. In addition, nets are commonly used to disseminate information concerning ARES/RACES operations throughout the state. It is expected that those who are checked in to a net will share new information with others who have not participated in the net.

The following net script is similar to that currently used by the Wisconsin ARES/RACES Net. The NCO uses a printed roster of members listed in callbook order, that is, alphabetically by letters after the numeral in a call. The script below can serve as a good starting point for any local HF, VHF or UHF voice net, and it can be easily modified to meet local needs.

PREAMBLE

Good morning, and welcome to the Wisconsin ARES/RACES Net.

This group meets every Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m. local time on 3.9935 MHz. The purpose of the net is to provide information concerning current and future ARES and RACES activities in Wisconsin and elsewhere that might be of interest to operators in our state.

Your Net Control Station today is (***your call***) and my name is (***your first name***). My station is located in (***your city***).

I will first take check-ins from the most current roster. After that, I will ask for check-ins from new stations that are not listed on the roster. Please state if you are on short time when you check in, and please let me know if you must leave the net before it has been secured.

- ***Take check-ins from the current roster.***
- ***Now ask for additional, non-roster check-ins; record them in the blanks provided at the bottom of the current roster – call, name and city.***
- ***Go through all check-ins for news and comments, starting with any short timers.***
- ***Take a standby every now and then for late or new check-ins.***
- ***When all stations have had a turn, give those who wish it a second turn.***
- ***At the end, ask for a volunteer NCO for the coming week.***
- ***Close the net.***

One item is worth noting. Why is it necessary to let the NCO know when you are leaving the net before it is finished? Regard this scenario: a VHF net is in progress during a real emergency, with 15 hams in the field during heavy rains and flooding. The NCO will most certainly be doing safety status checks periodically, to insure that all 15 hams in the field are OK. A ham that leaves the net without informing the NCO will not answer during the safety checks. It may be necessary for the NCO to send out another ham, or even a police officer, to find the missing ham. Thus, net scripts such as this one should always be aimed at practicing those procedures that will be used during real emergencies. Nets are training tools!

APPENDIX 11

RACES REGISTRATION AND SOME LEGAL ISSUES

WHY ARES OPERATORS NEED TO BE REGISTERED ALSO AS RACES OPERATORS.

Registration with the State of Wisconsin as a RACES operator has a number of advantages for both the RACES program and for the individual ham. Registration insures that the state has complied with federal guidelines that RACES operators are identified, registered and certified (FEMA CPG 1-15, March 1991, Guidance for Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, March 1991, p. 2-4). It also insures that ARES members, a pool of hams trained in emergency communications, can be utilized as operators if RACES is activated. Without registration, they cannot be used as radio operators, as explained below.

Under current federal guidelines (see Appendix 7), RACES activation means that RACES hams can communicate via radio ONLY with other RACES operators. Thus, during an incident in which RACES has been activated, non-RACES hams will be of very limited use as volunteers. The following scenario will help to make this clear. Assume that this scenario occurs some time before the current requirement in Wisconsin (January 2000) that all ARES members must also be registered RACES operators.

Joe Ham, KB9XYZ, is a member of his local ARES group but is not registered as a RACES operator. Wildfires have broken out in a number of counties, including Joe's. The local Emergency Manager has asked the county ARES Emergency Coordinator for communications support during the incident. The EC activates his ARES group and assigns Joe to run an HF rig in the local Emergency Operations Center. As the emergency escalates, RACES is activated in each county involved. The station that Joe is operating becomes a RACES station. Because Joe is not a RACES operator, he must move away from the rig and let a registered RACES operator take over. Joe is re-assigned to making coffee and answering the telephone.

That should make it clear. The advantage to Joe of being a registered RACES operator is that he can continue operating the HF rig after RACES activation. The advantage to the State of Wisconsin, the Emergency Manager, the RACES program and the public at large is that Joe can continue operating the HF rig after RACES activation, and another competent ham does not need to be found to take his place.

SOME LEGAL ISSUES. Did you know that Emergency Management volunteers, including ARES/RACES hams, are covered under Worker's Compensation in certain circumstances? Did you know that these volunteers could also, under certain circumstances, be indemnified by their sponsor against any tort liability to third persons incurred in the performance of emergency management activities while acting in good faith and in a reasonable manner?

Exactly what do those two sentences above mean? They mean that: 1) If you are injured while performing your duly authorized volunteer activities, you may well be covered under Worker's Compensation, which will pay for all or part of your medical bills. 2) If someone brings a lawsuit against you for something you did during your volunteer service, so long as you were doing what you were supposed to in a reasonable manner, the agency you were working for is required to provide legal defense and pay bills if the injured party is due any money.

But, none of the above applies if you were not authorized to volunteer and if you are not duly registered, in writing, with the agency that requested your services as a volunteer for that incident!

Simply being listed on a RACES or ARES roster at the municipal, county or state level is NOT enough. Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 166 on Emergency Management does provide for Worker's Compensation benefits and protection from tort liability for employees, and volunteers who fit certain criteria are considered to be employees, even if they are not paid. However, to fit the criteria, a volunteer must be duly registered in writing with the Emergency Management agency

that requests your services for that incident AND your “employer” must specifically authorize you to act on their behalf. Again, let us illustrate this with a scenario.

Joe Ham, KB9XYZ, is a member of his local ARES/RACES group, and his name appears on both the local and State of Wisconsin RACES list. While traveling on the expressway one afternoon, Joe comes on the scene of an accident. He helps a shaken motorist out of a damaged car, which is beginning to smolder. As he does this, Joe cuts his arm on a sharp piece of steel. The emergency room and medical bill for treatment of Joe’s cut arm totals \$436.

Local, county or state Emergency Management will not cover Joe under Worker’s Compensation. Although he is registered as an ARES/RACES member, he was not specifically authorized to respond to this accident. He will have to cover his medical expenses on his own or through his personal medical insurance. Another example:

Joe Ham, KB9XYZ, is a member of his local ARES/RACES group, and his name appears on both the local and State of Wisconsin RACES list. During a flooding incident in his region, he reports to his county Emergency Management department where he is registered on the roster of volunteers for the incident. Joe is then sent out to provide HT communications at a shelter set up at the local high school. At the school, Joe slips on a wet floor and breaks his leg.

In this case, Joe is covered under his county’s Worker’s Compensation program and it is very likely that they will pay all of his medical bills.

Wisconsin statutes provide for such coverage even for training activities.

These issues – coverage under Worker’s Compensation and coverage for tort liability – are both complicated topics with many ramifications that are open to legal interpretation. Furthermore, the coverage here has not been comprehensive. A somewhat expanded discussion can be found in the February and March 2000 issues of the Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator Newsletter, which can be viewed at or downloaded from the Wisconsin ARES/RACES web site at: <http://www.execpc.com/~skaplan>.

The message you should leave with is this:

1. If you are an Amateur Radio operator, make certain that you are registered with both ARES and RACES. Contact your ARES Emergency Coordinator to be sure. The only valid indication that you are registered as a RACES operator is a roster with your name on it issued by the Wisconsin State RACES Chief Radio Officer. These rosters are extracted directly from the state RACES database, and each ARES EC is provided with an updated copy of their roster whenever members are added or data is changed. “Wallpaper” certificates are just that, and are not valid indicators that you are registered in the database.
2. Be sure you are registered in writing with the municipal, county or state Emergency Management agency you are working for during emergency incidents. Most important: be sure you are registered for that specific incident.
3. Perform your assigned duties in good faith, toward the public good. Use common sense.
4. Do not expect any kind of coverage from Emergency Management or any other governmental agency if you engage in volunteer work without an explicit request to do so and without registering in writing for that specific incident. If in doubt, request that your name be added to a duty roster.
5. Keep your own safety, the safety of your family and the protection of your personal property paramount. When it comes to emergencies, be part of the solution, don’t become part of the problem.