Who Runs the Event

Who runs the event - the PRIMARY SERVED AGENCY

When you are working any event please understand that you are there to help the served agency with a communications shortfall. This, in and of itself, is embarrassing to some agencies. If you keep that fact in mind, you can eliminate confusion and problems by acknowledging that the served agency runs the event. Not just by your words, but by your actions.

The largest problem that Amateur Radio has is operators that go into an event and try to take over. Cowboy and "wanna-be" behavior WILL discourage the served agency from ever using Amateur Radio services again. In some cases it has resulted in the Amateur Radio operator involved being arrested and removed from the scene.

Most if not all Public Service agencies use some form of the Incident Command System as the model for operations during an emergency. You will help your served agency and your ARES/RACES group if you understand how the ICS works (see Section I.9 for an overview).

Who talks to the Media (press) - the primary served agency PIO

Dealing with the media/public: ** During an emergency do NOT make any statement(s) to the media/public about the emergency! The Public Information Officer (PIO) for the agency being served will make ALL statements. You can discuss nondetailed information about Amateur Radio if you have time and they ask. Do NOT include mode, frequency or traffic-volume information.

Should you encounter some very persistent media people, the following statement may help. Please check with your served agency before you use this statement.

"ARES is Amateur Radio Emergency Services. These are volunteer Amateur Radio communicators who are aiding local law enforcement, fire, EMS and other agencies with auxiliary or supplemental communications due to the current overload or difficulties due to high volume of traffic or other unusual conditions. We currently have (XX #) operators in places like the EOC, communications centers, red cross shelters and other places where additional communications are required."

Additional information from the ARRL about the Amateur Radio Emergency Service is at http://www.arrl.org/pio/emergen1.html. This is general information about ARES that the media may use as they wish.

How you can get involved

Contact your local ARES/RACES group and volunteer. You can be of help to these organizations by training in the disciplines needed for appropriate communication. Training in Emergency Communications BEFORE you are needed will help you develop the skills necessary to be an effective

ARES/RACES communicator.

During an event do your best to maintain a courteous, professional image. You may be working with several agencies including police, fire, first aid squads, National Guard, etc. Extend every possible courtesy to members of these groups. Make sure they know who you are, and what your communications capabilities are. But remember we are only there to communicate, not to provide other support.