

# ***RURAL IOWA AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICES***

## ***Fayette County Emergency Communications Plan***

28 DECEMBER, 2011

### **1. SAFETY FIRST**

If any action requested involves risk, the person should NOT take the action and should notify net control that he/she will not be performing the action requested, along with a statement of the risk assessment.

### **2. INTRODUCTION**

2.1 Rural Iowa ARES is a field organization of the **American Radio Relay League (ARRL)** and is composed of FCC licensed amateur radio operators who are trained emergency communicators, volunteering personal time, skills and equipment to serve in the public interest.

2.2 Rural Iowa ARES functions in this Emergency Communications Plan under the direction of the District 2 East Emergency Coordinator (DEC) with cooperation of the Fayette County Emergency Coordinator (EC). The Iowa Section Emergency Coordinator of the ARRL, with the support of local amateur radio operators, appoints the DEC and EC.

2.3 The DEC or EC may appoint Assistant Emergency Coordinators (AEC's) as needed.

2.4 The DEC or EC may appoint Duty Officers (DO's), whose primary duty is to activate Rural Iowa ARES within Fayette County if needed.

2.5 When activated, the DEC, EC or DO performing the activation will become the ARES Officer In Charge (OIC), or will designate an OIC. The OIC will be the final authority within Rural Iowa ARES for the event.

### **3. PURPOSE**

3.1 The purpose of this plan is to provide a written guide containing the minimum information needed in an emergency. *Each emergency is different and flexibility is necessary to provide an adequate response.*

3.2 The primary purpose of Rural Iowa ARES in Fayette County is to furnish emergency communications in the event of a natural or a man made emergency when regular communications fail or become inadequate or overloaded.

3.3 Drills, training and instruction shall be carried out to ensure readiness to respond quickly in providing effective amateur emergency communications.

34 Following is a list of jurisdictions/agencies that will be served, as requested, in an emergency. Other city and/or state agencies will be served as requested by the Fayette County Office of Emergency Management.

3.4.1 Incorporated jurisdictions within Fayette County.

3.4.2 Unincorporated areas or populations under the authority of the Fayette County Office of Emergency Management.

3.4.3 American Red Cross.

3.4.4 Police, Fire and EMS Departments.

3.4.5 Hospitals and Senior Care Facilities.

3.4.6 District 2 East Emergency Coordinator (DEC) of ARRL/ARES when requested by surrounding counties needing assistance.

3.4.7 State of Iowa Office of Emergency Management.

3.4.8 Federal Emergency Management Agency.

3.4.9 Salvation Army

3.5 Rural Iowa ARES may provide volunteer communications support for other public events in non-emergency events.

#### 4. PLAN ACTIVATION

4.1 Any member of Rural Iowa ARES who becomes aware that a communications emergency exists, should contact the DEC or EC and monitor the current assigned resource and tactical net frequencies.

4.2 Operators **are forbidden to go to the site of any emergency event unless authorized to do so by NET CONTROL.**

Net Control will only authorize operators to go to the site of an emergency event if the appropriate served agency **requests ARES assistance** at the site. The request, requester name, title, served agency and time will be documented in the Net Log.

Note: Mobil units may be sent to designated staging areas, but will remain there until assigned to the event by Net Control.

4.3 In any emergency in which amateur radio is requested to serve, amateur radio operators may be alerted by any Emergency Management Official or requesting agency by contacting the DEC or EC. The DEC or EC who activates ARES will become the ARES Officer in Charge (OIC). Contacts contained in Appendix 1.

4.4 The ARES OIC will be in charge of all ARES operations during any emergency operation.

He/She will be the senior Rural Iowa ARES authority for the event. All ARES participants will take direction from Him/Her. The OIC may change during the event at the discretion of the current OIC.

## 5. MOBILIZATION

5.1 The OIC will notify ARES members by using the most time efficient mode available at the time of activation.

5.2 Radio Frequency to be used or monitored in the event of an emergency is +147.345.

5.3 Upon notification that a communications emergency exists, members of Rural Iowa ARES will listen to the frequency and will only check in if they have urgent information or when the Net Control Station asks for such check-ins on the Emergency Net. Stations will maintain radio silence, unless they have business on the net.

## 6. NET CONTROL STATION DUTIES

6.1 The Rural Iowa ARES Emergency Net will be activated by the Net Control Station. Based upon the facts, stations will be fully advised as to the nature of the emergency.

Net control will establish backup frequencies and a backup NCS.

Full Net Control procedures are contained in Appendix 2.

6.2 Stations will be checked in from their current location and asked to standby for further instructions.

An inventory list will be made of operators and available equipment for possible assignment to requests for assistance from served agencies.

6.3 Mobile and portable stations may be dispatched as needed either to a "Staging" location or directly to the incident site as determined by the OIC. OIC must notify NCS which agency Official, by name and title, requested our deployment should our deployed units encounter a restricted access condition or other challenges. The location of each assignment will be record by the NCS in station log.

## 7. OPERATIONS

### 7.1 Messages

7.1.1 Formal Messages: Formal messages are those that are written in a standard format. All messages which request material or services that may require payment or replacement must be formal messages.

Message Forms: All formal messages must be written in standard ARRL format unless otherwise directed by the served agency.

It is strongly encouraged to restrict messages to 25 words or less, particularly if the message will be relayed multiple times or sent out of the area. Messages over 25 words are much less likely to

reach their destination quickly. Operators receiving messages from officials should encourage the officials to produce messages 25 words or less to ensure prompt and reliable delivery.

The served agency representative can create their own printed message on the Message Forms provided by the radio operators for that purpose.

Message Precedence: The operator must assign an ARRL precedence to the message. Precedence's will be assigned to all messages sent.

Any operator receiving a message should check the precedence of messages for EMERGENCY precedence.

If any messages are of EMERGENCY precedence, operator passing the message should be sure the receiving operator acknowledges EMERGENCY precedence.

All formal messages require the Printed Name, Title, Served Agency and site of the requester.

All requests to dispatch operators to a location REQUIRE; Printed Name, Title, Served Agency and Site of the requestor. These requests should be documented in the Net Log.

MESSAGES RECEIVED REQUESTING MATERIALS OR SERVICES WHICH MAY LATER REQUIRE PAYMENT OR REPAYMENT OF FUNDS WILL NOT BE TRANSMITTED UNTIL THEY CONTAIN THE PRINTED NAME, TITLE, SERVED AGENCY AND SITE OF REQUESTER.

**SAVE MESSAGES:** All operators must save copies of all formal messages.

### 7.1.2 Tactical Messages

Tactical Emergency Messages, such as Fire, Law Enforcement or Life or Death situations do not require numbering.

These are first priority messages and we use "BREAK, BREAK!" to get attention of the NCS, between transmissions. When accepting such messages for transmission, require only the following information:

- A. To (Example; Elgin Fire Department)
- B. What (Example; Pumper truck needed ASAP)
- C. Why (Example; Structure Fire)
- D. Where (Example; Elgin High School)
- E. Who (Example; Lt Mike Baker, Elgin Fire Department)

### 7.2 Transmitting

Stations must not transmit unless invited to do so by the Net Control Station.

#### 7.2.1 Exceptions:

- A. Stations having tactical emergency traffic.
- B. As designated in the standard operating procedure of Amateur Radio.

#### 7.2.2 Keep transmissions short and to the point.

All stations, including Net Control, should leave frequent gaps in their transmissions for emergency traffic. (Long enough for someone to recognize the gap and call "Break, Break").

### 7.3 Communication Methods

Operators should use the most efficient method available to transmit message.

**If available and appropriate, use the telephone, cell phone, Internet, packet, foot, automobile, etc.**

**The more traffic passed off the air, the more available amateur radio is for traffic to/from locations without alternate means of communications.**

## 8. [DRILLS, TESTS and ALERTS](#)

8.1 An annual test will be conducted during the fall of each year in conjunction with the nationwide Simulated Emergency Test (SET) sponsored by ARRL.

Periodic exercises will be conducted in cooperation with the Fayette County Emergency Management.

8.2 At the discretion of the DEC and EC will sponsor an unannounced activation at least once a year.

8.3 The Rural Iowa ARES Fayette County Communications Plan shall be reviewed annually with updates as necessary to keep this plan current and viable.

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**Appendix 1**

**Key Personnel Contact Information**

**1. Emergency Coordinator (EC)**

**Dan Bonjour, KD0BIJ**  
12251 175<sup>th</sup> St  
Fayette, Iowa 52142  
(563) 425-3281 Home  
faytech9@iowatelecom.net

**2. District 2 East Emergency Coordinator (DEC)**

**Eric Grams, N0ZJT**  
132 4th Avenue SE  
Oelwein, Iowa 50662  
(319) 480-1376  
n0zjt@arrl.net

**3. Iowa Section Emergency Coordinator**

**Dan Miller, AC0OF**  
(515) 285-7981 Home  
ac0of@arrl.net

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### **Appendix 2**

#### **Emergency Net Procedures**

This is {your name} {your call sign} activating the Rural Iowa ARES Communications Net.

If the following applies insert: **This is a drill only, repeating this is a drill only.**

Rural Iowa ARES has been activated for emergency response communications duty.

There has been {state the emergency/reason for response}

All Rural Iowa ARES personnel are requested to check in to this net.

This is a directed net. Net control operations will be conducted using strict emergency procedures as follow:

- \* All stations are to standby until called by net control.
- \* Any station wishing to contact another station on the net must obtain permission from the net control prior to establishing contact.
- \* Any station that has checked into this net must notify Net Control before leaving the net.
- \* All stations, which check into this net, will be required to respond to acknowledgement of bulletins, announcements or other communications, as requested.
- \* During ARES roll call; check in using your call sign only.

Are there currently any stations with Emergency or Priority traffic?

Are there any stations with Health & Welfare or Routine traffic?

This is Rural Iowa ARES Net Control all Rural Iowa ARES please check in now giving your location and availability.

This is {your call sign}, standing by.

{as stations check in give them an assignment or have them standby for further instructions}

**REPEAT EVERY 15 MINUTES** this is the Rural Iowa ARES Net {providing support for (or) conducting a drill}. Any stations with traffic please call {your call sign}

**A roll call is to be performed every 30-60 minutes of those stations checked into the net.**

#### **Termination of Net**

This is {your name} {your call sign}. Net operations will now be terminating. I want to thank all the Rural Iowa ARES members as well as any other amateurs for their assistance. I will now close the net and return the repeater back to general amateur use.